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*The* **Guardian** Weekly


# Diana is at peace. The nation is not

FUNERAL WATCH
**Matthew Engel**

NOW WE begin to understand why the most popular and enduring tragic plays of history have been written about kings and princes and earls, and not about, say, the European Union or the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Tradition dictates that last Saturday was to be an end of it; the burial of the dead marking the start of the passage back to whatever the living can recapture of their old normality.

An archbishop might say it was a time for healing. Possibly the archbishop did say it was a time for healing. By the time he spoke, no one was listening properly. They were trying to take in the enormity of what they had previously heard.

This was probably the most public occasion the world has ever known. Earl Spencer used it to come as near as anyone has done in Britain since 1745 to raising the rebel standard against the monarchy. His address was not a eulogy, but a battle cry.

Even before he began, one observer in Westminster Abbey thought the scene resembled the House of Commons. The Spencers staring across at the Windsors a couple of sword-lengths away. But these are two families that match any political party for internal dysfunction, for the range of their splits, feuds, sub-feuds, and even the odd lingering cross-current of affection. Montagues and Capulets for our times, but with the war outlasting both love and death.

The life of Diana was a tragic story. We may now be embarking on the sequel: The Tragedy of Charles III. But maybe there is never going to be a Charles III. And, if there is, then in the overblown atmosphere of last weekend one could be forgiven for wondering whether it really will be Charles Windsor rather than Charles Spencer, the new popular hero, and a far more gifted moment-seizer than the Windsors have ever produced.

Throughout the speech, the Queen sat stony-faced. Ten years ago, it used to be considered mild *lèse-majesté* if someone said she didn't smile enough when she waved. Now, in the Mall, as the crowd began to drift away, the support for Earl Spencer seemed unanimous.

It was the strangest imaginable climax to this strange and mournful day. The occasion was best defined by ear rather than eye. The low hum of chatter and organ music inside the abbey. The silence from outside. And every minute the muffled tenor bell as the cortege drew closer.

It was the same when the ceremony began. The royals froze into

continued on page 10



PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GODWIN

# Canny icon rooted in a bygone era

APPRECIATION
**Madeleine Bunting**

MILLIONS of people around the world will be mourning Mother Teresa this weekend when her funeral takes place in Calcutta. The tiny, stooped nun, who died last week, had won worldwide recognition for her dedication to the poorest of the poor after receiving the Nobel peace prize in 1979. She fitted the template of sainthood perfectly: wherever comfort were needed, she was there, be it in the Ethiopian famine or Armenia's earthquake. She was seen as a brilliant example of self-sacrificial Christian love, devoting herself to the welfare of others.

Hardened Western journalists emerged from interviews overwhelmed by her unique combination of vulnerability and shrewdness. Behind the soft voice and the hand-holding lay something of the canny Albanian peasant. Many were disarmed and charmed. She had an astonishing talent for getting her way with politicians and statesmen, putting them on the spot with demands for donations and assistance for her charitable work.

She inspired thousands of young women to don the blue-bordered white sari and join her order, the Missionaries of Charity, which opened convents all over the world. But solving problems was never Mother Teresa's ambition. There were many who (discreetly) criticised her work. Yes, she took homeless, sick people off the streets of Calcutta and gave them a clean, quiet place to die, but she never tried to tackle the causes of problems such as homelessness.

Aid workers in India and the West increasingly found this charity work frustrating.



Mother Teresa, who cared tirelessly for the sick and homeless of Calcutta, and was widely seen as a modern saint PHOTOGRAPH: AP

Significantly, many Western aid agencies did not fund her homes. In private, they argued that her work dated from a 19th century mindset more attuned to good works than social justice, development and empowering the marginalised. She could have been an enormously influential campaigner for the rights of children and the poor, but she kept aloof.

Concern was also voiced in private that the standard of medical treatment in her homes left much to be desired. Painkillers were rarely used. Even greater concern surrounded homes for disabled and sick children where there was little attempt at rehabilitation and education.

Others worried that Mother Teresa's style of management was autocratic and erratic. She groomed no successor, and observers wonder whether the order can continue to flourish.

But these concerns were always voiced in private. The power of the public perception of Mother Teresa would brook no criticism of the icon.

The puzzle is how this deeply conservative Catholic was able to build up such a devoted following. In India, she was revered as a holy woman. In the West, one would have expected some scepticism. On a string of issues, Mother Teresa represented the kind of traditional Catholicism which millions have been shaking off. She shared Pope John Paul II's visceral hatred of abortion. She spoke vehemently against contraception and divorce. She was even accused of consorting with dictators. But her reputation survived untarnished.

**Obituary, page 6**
**Washington Post, page 14**

# New scandal threatens to engulf Winnie Mandela

**David Beresford and Wally Mbhele in Johannesburg**

THE Winnie Mandela scandal is about to erupt again with new allegations that she ordered the murder of a Soweto doctor and was involved in a previous killing of a teenager.

One of two gunmen convicted of Dr Abu-Baker Asvat's murder on January 27, 1989 now claims he was contracted to do it by Mrs Mandela.

At a Durban prison, Nicholas Dlamini said: "Mrs Mandela promised us R20,000 ($4,000) to murder Dr Asvat."

The Guardian has obtained a copy of an affidavit sworn by a missing witness in Mrs Mandela's 1991 trial, Katiza Cebekhulu, in which he claims that, on the instructions of Mrs Mandela, he pointed out Dr Asvat's surgery to two men hours before the murder.

Mrs Mandela is expected to be questioned by South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on September 25.

Stompie Seipei, aged 14, died after he and four youths were kidnapped from a Methodist place of safety in Soweto by members of the "Mandela Football Club" — a gang of thugs around Mrs Mandela.

At the subsequent trial, she claimed the minister running the home had sexually abused the boys, and she denied assault and kidnapping.

Stompie was badly beaten at Mrs Mandela's home on suspicion that he was an informer. Dr Asvat is believed to have been called in by Mrs Mandela to examine Stompie. She is alleged to have tried to persuade him to back up her abuse story. He refused.

She was brought to trial on charges of kidnapping and assault in 1991. Witnesses who provided an alibi have since retracted. She got a suspended sentence for kidnap.

The football club leader, Jerry Richardson, received a life sentence for Stompie's murder.

Mr Cebekhulu joined members of the football club in assaulting his four friends. But he failed to testify, and it transpired that he had been spirited out of South Africa by the ANC, landing up in prison in Zambia. He was taken to Britain by MP Emma Nicholson.

In a sworn affidavit taken by a South African officer in London in 1995, Mr Cebekhulu claimed Mrs Mandela took part in the Stompie assault.

"Dr Asvat came and said Stompie could die at any time and must go to hospital immediately. The doctor left . . . Late that night I saw Mrs Mandela carrying something in her hand which she lifted high and plunged down into a body that I identified as being Stompie."

He said that, later, two men came to the house. "Mrs Mandela had called me and instructed me to drive with them and show them where Dr Asvat's surgery was."



***This week's issue contains a two-page readers' survey with radios to be won. Please turn to page 16***


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Austria | AS30 | Malta | 60c |
| Belgium | BF75 | Netherlands | G 4.75 |
| Denmark | DK16 | Norway | NK 16 |
| Finland | FM 10 | Portugal | E300 |
| France | FF 13 | Saudi Arabia | SR 6.50 |
| Germany | DM 4 | Spain | P 300 |
| Greece | DR 450 | Sweden | SK 19 |
| Italy | L 3,000 | Switzerland | SF 3.30 |

# Standard-bearer of our humanity has been lost

I STRUGGLED unsuccessfully to restrain my tears while watching the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. I became ever more aware of the unprecedented depth of genuine affection that people held for her. It was abundantly clear, from the expression on people's faces alone, that the loss of the princess was a deeply felt and very personal tragedy. It was transcendent and I found myself wondering, why were we all so visibly shaken?

In an era of cardboard cut-out politicians, Hollywood frauds and shamelessly selfish athletes, the Princess of Wales was singularly human. Her strengths and weaknesses, humour and compassion, joys and sorrows set her apart. She was the Western world's most important standard-bearer of humanity.

Today, in Ontario, the provincial government is looking to the "market place" to set the standard of conduct for the public business of the province. In doing so it has abandoned its role as the guardian of the social flame for the people of Ontario.

The provincial government makes no pretence of being the visible embodiment of the human soul of the people of Ontario. It is proud of its "businesslike" approach.

Diana was our shield against the dehumanising government mantras of "global competitiveness", "increased productivity" and "the bottom line". She was our protection against the overbearing presence of technology.

Will her example, her memory and her loss galvanise us enough to repossess our humanity by bringing to heel the techno-economic juggernaut that took her life and is inexorably reducing all of us to mere cogs and gears in its ever-expanding machine?
*Paul Isaacs,*
*Denbigh, Ontario, Canada*

PUTTING to one side the drunk-driving factor, which could have resulted in more deaths, I agree with the sentiments expressed by several of your letter writers (September 7). Those who were eager for intrusive photos and stories about Princess Diana have to accept some responsibility. But why are they so interested? Isabel Best identified the problem when she wrote of the public's nosiness and greed.

Western society has become increasingly materialistic with most people aspiring to a lifestyle beyond what they can afford. The public has become obsessed with the details of the lifestyles of the rich and famous. To some extent, therefore, society is responsible.

Rather than trying to apportion blame, let us examine our own priorities. Perhaps a more healthy and less materialistic society would have prevented this and many other tragedies.
*Shell McConville,*
*Beenleigh, Queensland, Australia*

OF COURSE it is tragic when young people are killed, but isn't most of the commentary on Princess Di missing the main point?

Whatever the provocations of the paparazzi, the fact remains that driving an enormous two-or-three-ton armoured limousine at high speed within the Paris city limits, means that someone may well be killed or maimed. Thank goodness this particular juggernaut hit a pillar and not a French family in a minicar. Had such a family been in the way, the national shame would have exceeded anything football hooligans could produce.

The contempt for ordinary people underlying this episode should go into balanced obituaries with all the commendable concern for Aids and land-mines. Why gloss over potentially murderous jet-set high jinks; condemnation just might cut down the chance of repeat performances.

There's a tunnel at the end of the East River Drive in Manhattan too. Just imagine how sympathetic the comments would have been, both here and in Britain, if some pop star had played out the same scenario there, paparazzi and all, in a two-ton Cadillac and with the same results.
*Brian A Jones,*
*Brooklyn, New York, USA*

EARL SPENCER, in attributing cause in the tragic death of the Princess of Wales, rightly said that the paparazzi are rewarded by the editors and managements of the tabloids (Diana's brother leads attack on press, September 7). But above these managers are the directing minds of the corporations that unstintingly pay the crazy sums of money.

The members of the corporate boards, including owners, are identifiable and can be held accountable for the corporate control systems that in turn determine what the paparazzi are motivated to do. There is equally the public, who buy the papers and fuel the motivation.

But the place to start is the corporate minds, who count on the tabloid-purchasing public to not think about how they are being used, and who have not yet answered publicly for their own standards of decency.
*Henry E McCandless,*
*Ottawa, Canada*

THE outburst of popular feeling triggered by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, focused on her supposed role as "the princess of the poor" and honoured her for her charitable work among the sick and underprivileged.

Can these mourners be the same British people who made it clear in recent elections that no party which proposed to redistribute any part of the national wealth to the poor and the sick via raised taxation could expect their vote?
*John Roberts,*
*Labastide-Paumes, France*

"WHEN I give food to the poor they call me a saint. When I ask *why* they have no food they call me a communist." These are the words of the little-known Dom Helder Camara, a one-time Archbishop in northeast Brazil for more than 20 years.

Both Mother Teresa and Princess Diana did indeed have much in common. That dangerous word "why" was never on their lips. Perhaps this explains in part their iconic stature. Both are sweet, sincere, but most of all, safe, and in the long run utterly irrelevant to the 35,000 innocents who die each day because we live in a world which violently rejects any notion of sharing wealth in a more equitable manner. I don't doubt that the world needs compassion. But it needs justice more than charity, and perhaps for every embrace it needs the question "why".
*Paul Laverty,*
*Glasgow*



## Eugenics and shared beliefs

IT WON'T do for Jonathan Freedland (The dirty little secret of the old British left, September 7) to use Fabianism's very well-known history of eugenics to bash socialism in general. Most Western societies in the pre-war period fostered versions of racial élitism, regardless of ideology: Scandinavia, Austria and Switzerland, but also Britain and America. Germany may have gone furthest along the road to social Darwinism, but pillars of the British right like Churchill also espoused eugenicist views. Competitive individualism as well as collectivism bear the responsibility.

The real scandal is that liberal societies promoted, and continue to promote, citizenship rights only for their white, non-disabled population. People with learning difficulties and other disabled people have never been treated with equality and justice. The current promotion of genetic screening, euthanasia and other discriminatory policies underlies the inhumanity at the heart of Western culture, with medical science as the willing agent of exclusion.
*(Dr) Tom Shakespeare,*
*University of Leeds, Leeds*

BRITAIN recoiled at the feeble quality of recruits for the Boer war and groups such as the British Eugenics Society developed the ideas of Darwin and Galton into embryonic policies.

Across the Atlantic, in Indiana, a policy of compulsory sterilisation was waged against "common drunkards, habitual criminals, epileptics, imbeciles, the feeble-minded, or those afflicted with hereditary insanity, advanced consumption or any contagious venereal disease". This was in 1907.
*Adam Cree,*
*Darwen, Lancashire*

## Beware sham leaders of left

I NEARLY fell out of my seat laughing when I read the closing line of Alan Travis's "Blacks 'lose out' under Blair" (July 27), referring to "President Clinton's strong support for affirmative action programmes".

Clinton may talk a good game on race, as he does on everything else, but when California and Texas passed anti-affirmative action initiatives in university admissions, he responded with a big, fat nothing as far as doing anything to counter them, such as stopping federal aid for any institution that does away with affirmative action.

In contrast, when California and Arizona voters opted for a bill that would decriminalise cannabis for medical use, the president, who didn't inhale, threatened to bring the full force of the US government down on any doctor who prescribed marijuana to his/her patients.

My condolences to the British people on having an ersatz leftish leadership. I hope Mr Blair turns out to be less of a sham than Bill Clinton. Please don't repeat our error and allow him to sneak through measures that a conservative couldn't get away with simply because he poses as "one of us".
*Daphne Cuyzpo,*
*Montauk, New York, USA*

## Briefly

AMID the recent debate in Britain about the Millennium Dome project, I have heard of an initiative, supported by notable individuals and organisations around the world, lobbying for the millennium to be marked by writing off the entire Third World debt.

To enable countries to start with a clean slate would be a truly visionary statement, would bring hope for the next millennium and jolt us out of our jaded *fin de siècle* malaise.
*Jason Pennells,*
*Cambridge*

I AM surprised that George Kennan was "horrified" when he heard about the US intervention in Somalia (Busybodies can do more harm than good, August 3). The history of the United States is one of "interventions", be they overt or covert — Somalia, Iraq, Panama, Grenada, Vietnam, Cuba, Chile, Guatemala, Korea, etc, going back to the last century, when the US "intervened" in Mexico and expropriated a huge section of that country in the form of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California.
*Mahfouz Y El-Tawil,*
*Esberg, Denmark*

BACK-TO-NATURE Christian bashing is OK, but Robert Lacville plumbs new depths of absurdity. He writes: "Africa was monotheist when Arabia and Europe were still pagan. God the Creator ruled Africa 2,000 years before Jesus or Allah" (A Country Diary, August 10).

In fact, Africa was thoroughly animist, even in North Cameroon. The Mofou may indeed have had a chief god, but so did the Greeks — but that's far from monotheism.

God did indeed rule Africa 4,000 years ago, Mr Lacville, but it took the Hebrews to tell the rest of us like it or not.
*(Dr) A C Carr,*
*Dundas, Ontario, Canada*

AS AN Australian I would like to make a correction to A Country Diary (August 17), concerning magpies. Australian magpies do not just attack the back of the head — they go for the eyes and in fact destroyed the lens in my young boy's left eye two years ago. I urge any readers to take extreme care if they are around these sweet-sounding, dangerous birds.
*(Dr) Peter Gilet,*
*Salatiga, Indonesia*

CAN anyone explain why the solution to Britain's drug problems is considered to be decriminalising drugs, while the solution to the country's handgun problems is felt to be a total ban?
*Alan Fairhurst,*
*Manchester*


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# Palestinians round up militants

**Julian Borger in Jerusalem and Martin Kettle in Washington**

THE Palestinian Authority has bowed to Israeli and United States pressure by arresting 35 Islamist activists from Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and closing a pro-Hamas newspaper.

The move, hailed as a "positive step" by the US state department, came in the run-up to this week's Middle East visit by the US secretary of state, Madeleine Albright.

Hamas's military wing claimed responsibility for last week's suicide bombings in Jerusalem on July 30 and on Thursday last week, but Palestinian leaders had previously said they would not order any arrests in the absence of hard evidence against individuals. No Palestinian officials were available for comment.

Hamas activists said the arrests took place at the weekend in Palestinian-run towns in the West Bank. Among the Islamists detained were Jamal Mansour, the leader of Hamas in Nablus, and Mahmoud Musle, the leader in Ramallah.

Israel has detained more than 100 Palestinians from areas under its control since last week's bombing, and sealed off the Gaza Strip and Palestinian-run West Bank towns. Eight people, including three suicide bombers, were killed in last week's Jerusalem attack.

Israel's justice ministry has demanded the extradition of the Palestinian police chief, Ghazi al-Jabali. Israeli police accuse him of sending his men on assassination missions against Jewish settlers on the West Bank. Mr al-Jabali denies the charges and insisted he would not be handed over.

After visiting Israel, the first leg of a trip that will be dominated by security issues following the bombings and Israel's ill-fated commando raid into Lebanon last week, Mrs Albright will move on to the Palestinian entity, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia, with a possible stop in Lebanon.

Her first visit to the region had been put off in the hope that events would take an upturn. Instead things have got steadily worse. Now the focus is on trying to prevent things going further downhill.

**Washington Post, page 13**


**Police patrol a Jerusalem mall amid heightened security since last week's bombing** PHOTO: JIM HOLLANDER

## Hizbullah success leaves Israel in shock

**Julian Borger in Tibnin**

WHEN an Irish United Nations patrol spots Hizbullah Shi'ite guerrillas moving through the deep, dry valleys of south Lebanon, a radio alert is immediately raised in the peacekeepers' quirky code: "Mister Softy is around".

Mister Softy is very much at large among the tobacco plantations and olive groves surrounding the Irish base near Tibnin. The peacekeepers believe that — after being stymied for a year by Israeli intelligence successes — Hizbullah is making a comeback. The Iranian-backed movement has launched increasingly daring raids into the border "security zone" occupied by Israel and its client South Lebanon Army.

On Sunday, Hizbullah attacked an Israeli position inside the zone, killing one soldier. But the bloodiest proof of Hizbullah's revival came in the early hours of Friday last week, when its guerrillas combined with the Lebanese army and the Shi'ite Amal militia to inflict the worst rout Israel has suffered in 20 years.

They killed 12 members of an élite unit of the Israeli navy which had come ashore on a commando raid possibly aimed at an Amal base near the village of Insariyeh.

The shock to Israeli society has been profound. At the weekend an opposition Labour politician, Yossi Beilin, announced the formation of a cross-party lobby for unilateral withdrawal from south Lebanon. He is reported to have at least the tacit support of several generals and government ministers who now believe Israel can be better defended from within its own borders.

The prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, tried to stem speculation about a pull-out, which, he said "only encourages Hizbullah".

UN observers say Israel's war in Lebanon may be containable but it is almost certainly unwinnable.

Coloured banners — yellow for Hizbullah and green for Amal — adorn every mosque, alongside black flags mourning "martyrs" who died fighting the Israeli occupation. On almost every street corner there are lurid portraits of guerrilla leaders and fundamentalist imams.

Mohamed Rashid, aged 63, the mukhtar (village leader) of Ayta Al-Jabbal, reckons 70 per cent of his community support Amal, the main Shi'ite political movement, which provides most of the economic assistance to the south. Thirty per cent support Hizbullah, which does most of the fighting, while all his people support "the resistance".

Asked about Israel's concern that a withdrawal from its "security zone" would simply allow Hizbullah and Amal to launch attacks on its northern towns, Mr Rashid insisted that local leaders like him would not allow it, for fear of an Israeli return.

"The Lebanese here are against Syrians, Iranians, Israelis and all outsiders . . . If the Israelis leave Lebanon, the factions will stop. They are only fighting to force them out. And if the factions tried anything, the people would stop the factions," he said.

## Jones rejects Clinton sex case 'offer'

**Ed Vulliamy in Washington**

PAULA JONES, the woman suing President Bill Clinton for sexual harassment, has rejected an offer to settle the case for $700,000, according to her adviser.

But the adviser, Susan Carpenter-McMillan, said Ms Jones's lawyers are urging her to accept. On Monday, Gilbert Davis and Joseph Cammarata sought to withdraw from the case because of "fundamental differences" with their client as Ms Jones ploughed on, determined to face the president in court.

Ms Carpenter-McMillan said that the president's lawyers had offered to pay out the full sum claimed by Ms Jones — which is equivalent to a year's presidential salary.

The reported offer from the president comes only weeks after the Jones camp filed an intention to bring into the case other women to whom Mr Clinton is alleged to have made sexual advances, and it was ready to detail instances involving Ms Jones other than the central alleged episode in an Arkansas hotel.

This was in May 1991 when, it is claimed by Ms Jones, Mr Clinton, then state governor, summoned her to his room, exposed himself, and asked her to perform what the writ calls "a type of sex".

President Clinton's lawyer, Robert Bennett, who is in Australia, denied that an offer to settle had been made, to which Ms Carpenter-McMillan retorted: "If he says that, he's lying".

The White House is anxious to get the suit out of the way before it sullies the second term of a president already embroiled in a campaign finance scandal.

A court hearing, which the president tried to prevent, is scheduled to open in Arkansas on May 27. He will be subpoenaed.

Under a settlement there would have been a statement, understood to apologise for any damage done to Ms Jones's reputation but falling well short of an admission that the incident or any others took place. Denying the central allegation, the president's lawyers have always refused to tender an apology or an admission of any kind.

## Crucifixions timed to attract crowds

**Kathy Evans**

**A COURT in the Gulf emirate of Abu Dhabi has sentenced two convicted murderers to be publicly crucified before being executed by firing squad on Friday.**

**According to one report in the desert town of Al Ain, the two are to be tied to crosses erected outside the town's central prison for up to eight hours, as a public humiliation and deterrent to others. Other reports said the men would be tied to posts, or to palm trees, as recommended by the preliminary court.**

**The two men were originally due to be crucified on Monday and executed on Tuesday, but local officials said that both sentences had been postponed until the Muslim weekend to encourage larger crowds to attend. The weekend begins on Thursday lunchtime and Al Ain offers little public entertainment.**

**Majid Faker Hussein, a national of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the Iranian-born Abdul Mushtaq were part of a gang in Al Ain which kidnapped bank customers and robbed them before killing them. Five people — two UAE citizens and three Asians — were said to have been murdered. Other gang members have received long jail terms.**

**The crucifixion has been confirmed by the UAE president, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahayan.**

**Local commentators said it was not known whether the prisoners would be given water. "The intention is not to torture them but to humiliate them for what they have done," one commentator said. He added that the men would be protected by the police from public reaction. The execution by firing squad the next day will take place inside the prison.**

**Crucifixion is rare in the Gulf and virtually unknown in the Emirates, which has a reputation for liberal social traditions. Justice ministry officials said the punishment was "relatively commonplace in Saudi Arabia".**

**The sentences come as attention is focused on Muslim judicial procedures in the wake of the case of two British nurses facing beheading in Saudi Arabia. UAE commentators pointed out that in the Al Ain case, the men were serial killers whose crimes were particularly heinous and who endangered public security.**

**"This is not medieval. Times might change in the rest of the world but the Koran does not," said one resident.**

## Comoran rebels rejoice

THE Red Cross this week flew relief supplies to the Indian Ocean spice island of Anjouan as insurgents celebrated the drubbing of government forces sent to end their secession, *writes David Beresford in Johannesburg*.

The Red Cross said that 40 people had been killed and 25 injured in clashes last week in the former French colony, when an invasion by 300 troops from the main island of Grande Comore unexpectedly turned into a rout.

There were unconfirmed reports that white soldiers had been seen with the rebels, raising suspicions that mercenaries might have been behind the reversal at arms suffered by the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros — which rules Anjouan and a third island in the archipelago, Moheli. Diplomatic sources in South Africa said peace talks supervised by the Organisation for African Unity were expected to go ahead in Ethiopia this week.

All communications with Anjouan were cut by the Comoran government last week as part of an attempted blockade. But there were reports from the island on Monday that a local businessman, Ahmed Charikane, was leading the secessionists and was planning to set up an administration.

A spokeswoman for the Red Cross, Jo Fox, said in Pretoria that there were shortages of food and fuel on Anjouan and "numbers" of displaced and missing persons. The Red Crescent and Red Cross were flying in with medical and food supplies.

The French are also believed to be sending relief supplies to Anjouan after refusing appeals by President Mohamed Taki to intervene militarily and put down the secession. "It's an internal affair," explained a French government spokesman.



# Algerians fall prey to fresh massacres

**Rachid Khiari**

ATTACKERS massacred at least 87 people near the Algerian capital at the weekend, slashing throats, cutting off arms and opening women's stomachs, survivors and hospital officials said.

About 100 people were injured in the three-hour attack that began on Friday night last week on the outskirts of Beni Messous, 20km west of Algiers, hospital officials said.

Two opposition political parties claimed that about 150 people had been killed in the attack.

About 50 men armed with knives and hatchets surrounded the area at about 10pm, then kicked in doors and went after their victims, most of whom were women. The assailants reportedly screamed like jackals as they surrounded the area, a characteristic also described by witnesses to previous massacres.

Despite desperate calls for help by the people of Beni Messous, it was not until 1am that the security forces arrived and the assailants left. There is a military barracks in Beni Messous and it was not clear why help did not come sooner.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks. Such massacres are usually blamed on the Armed Islamic Group, one of several factions trying to topple Algeria's military-backed government.

A series of other killings on Friday and Saturday last week left nearly 100 dead, most of them Muslim militants killed by the security forces, Algerian newspapers reported.

Last Friday, four people were killed and 27 injured by a bomb planted under a seat of a bus near Blida, 30 miles south of the capital.

Four members of the Algerian Renewal Party had their throats slit at a roadblock near Saida, southwest of Algiers; 16 people were killed in other attacks in the same region. — *AP*

**Le Monde, page 19**



**Skull thuggery . . . An Aboriginal elder Ken Colbung studies a statue of the 19th century Aboriginal warrior Yagan, whose bronze head was severed from this statue on Heirisson Island, near Perth, five days after the real skull was returned to Australia from Britain**
PHOTOGRAPH: GREG WOOD

# Hashimoto strengthens his grip on Japanese politics

**Jonathan Watts in Tokyo**

BUOYED by favourable opinion polls and progress in his government's reform programme, the Japanese prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, secured a second term as head of the ruling party this week.

Despite the factional nature of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Mr Hashimoto was a unanimous choice as party president, the first incumbent in 13 years to be re-elected unopposed. The vote of confidence reflects the change he wrought in the party's fortunes in his first two-year term, and his ability to satisfy the electorate's desire for a strong leader.

Although Mr Hashimoto has maintained the unlikely alliance with the Social Democratic Party (SDP), he has restored the LDP's image as the natural party of government. The LDP comfortably won last year's lower house election and since then a steady trickle of defections has strengthened its position.

The latest defection, which took place last week, restored the LDP's absolute majority for the first time in more than four years.

Opinion polls suggest Mr Hashimoto has the qualities the people are looking for. Shortly after he began his first term in January 1996, a record 71 per cent thought he had the capacity for leadership. Last month, his cabinet's approval rating was 49 per cent, higher than the share of the vote the party secured during October's election, suggesting the public has been impressed by steps to cut spending and carry out reform — including a plan to strengthen the power of the prime minister.

Despite his background — an LDP aristocrat who inherited a seat from his father and built a support base by leading the conservative war veterans' association — Mr Hashimoto has made strides recently in improving relations with Japan's neighbours.

In July, he launched an initiative aimed at resolving a long-standing territorial dispute with Russia. At the end of last month, talks aimed at restoring diplomatic relations with North Korea recommenced after a break of several years. And last week Mr Hashimoto became the first Japanese prime minister since the end of the second world war to visit northeastern China, where he attended an exhibition marking the brutal occupation of the region by the Japanese army from 1931-45.

The next test of his leadership comes at the end of this month when Tokyo and Washington release a final version of revised defence co-operation guidelines. The revision is expected to increase Japan's military profile, a cause of considerable concern to China, both Koreas and the pacifist SDP.

Mr Hashimoto also faces domestic hurdles in trying to push through huge government spending cuts and ambitious reforms which could alienate his supporters in the LDP and the bureaucracy.

## The Week

**THE world's largest aid donor, Japan, is preparing to slash its overseas development assistance budget by 10 per cent next year, a move that will hit African countries and the UN projects hard. In the past six years Tokyo has provided more than $70 billion in assistance — or 20 per cent of the world's total.**

**UP TO 400 people were feared drowned after a crowded ferry boat sank off the western coast of Haiti.**

**TWELVE people were killed and 43 injured in a collision between a train and a fuel truck at an automatic crossing in the French town of Sainte-Antoine du Breuilh.**

**CAMBODIAN aviation authorities had to buy back a flight recorder pilfered from the site of last week's Vietnam Airlines crash near Phnom Penh in which 64 died, an aviation official said.**

**SOLDIERS loyal to the Cambodian leader, Hun Sen, have executed at least 40 military officers or officials from the opposing royalist political party that he deposed in a coup in July, according to a UN report.**

Washington Post, page 13

**PAUL KEATING, the former Australian prime minister, has revived his campaign for Australia to become a republic, calling on people to demand the change.**

**FOR the third year, Sri Lankan government forces and Tamil separatist rebels held their fire to allow health officials to vaccinate 2 million children against polio.**

**A MAN has been arrested following a series of arson attacks and two bomb explosions at Swedish sports stadiums in a bid to derail Sweden's bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games, police said.**

Games for Athens, page 31

**THE European Union is to grant nearly $110 million to Ukraine to help shore up the dilapidated concrete sarcophagus encasing the Chernobyl nuclear plant.**

**GEORGE SOLTI, the internationally renowned conductor, has died, aged 84.**

Obituary next week

**SIR Rudolf Bing, the distinguished former general manager of the New York Metropolitan Opera, has died, aged 95**

Obituary, page 28

**THE government of Congo, formerly Zaire, said it had no objection to the burial of the deposed dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko, in his homeland following his death in Morocco on Sunday.**

Washington Post, page 14

# Caribbean banana growers facing ruin

**Stephen Bates in Brussels**

THE CHILL winds of international competition look set to blow like a hurricane through the banana plantations of the West Indies as a decision made in Geneva by the World Trade Organisation is likely to expose them to ruthless competition from US multinationals.

The European Commission was this week studying a report by a WTO panel ruling against Europe's attempts to protect banana exports from former British and French colonies following complaints from the United States and four Latin American countries, Honduras, Guatemala, Ecuador and Mexico.

Officials were predicting that the WTO's decision that its banana rules violate world trade will mean either that the EU will have to buy off huge US multinationals, such as Chiquita and Del Monte, or amend the regulations leaving Caribbean farmers facing ruin. Or, possibly, they face a future in crops that the US might like even less, such as cocaine.

A senior West Indies diplomat said: "It will not just be difficult for our growers, it will be impossible. We just cannot get down to the kind of efficiency levels that the big plantations of Latin America can achieve. There will be social chaos."

Accusations were being made that the action was brought by President Clinton's administration in return for political funding from the giant US fruit producers. It was also being claimed that the Americans had used their muscle to pressure states such as Mexico, which does not export bananas to Europe, to complain about discrimination.

An announcement from the commission about its next step is not expected until next month, but the banana ruling adds another layer of tension between the EU and the US.

The subjects of disputes range from US attempts to prevent trade with Cuba to whether the EU should be forced to import hormone-fattened US beef, when European farmers are not allowed to produce beef by such methods, and whether the EU should allow in American beef tallow, not produced to the specifications laid down in the wake of the BSE crisis.

The last dispute has potentially serious implications for the cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries, both of which use tallow.

The banana story offers a graphic illustration of the pressures on a Third World industry. It is estimated that in Latin America, with its mechanised production methods on large, flat plantations, bananas can be harvested for $162 a tonne. The cost of the bananas produced by the farmers of West Indian islands, such as the Windwards, works out at nearer $500 a tonne.

**Slicing up the banana market**

Producers' share of the European Union banana market, 1995
Total EU imports 3.7 million tonnes per year

St Vincent: 1.3%
Guatemala: 1.5%
Honduras: 1.6%
Guadeloupe: 1.7%
Dominican Rep: 2%
Jamaica: 2.3%
St Lucia: 2.7%
Cameroon: 3.7%
Ivory Coast: 4.3%
Martinique: 8%
Canaries: 9.9%

Source: Bananalink

Four years ago, in an attempt to even out the competition, the EU imposed quotas on dollar bananas, tariffs and import licences allocated on advantageous terms to European companies, such as Geest and Fyffes, traditionally buying their bananas from the Caribbean. Licences added $5 to the cost of a box and cost US producers $180 million a year. But it still has not prevented Chiquita and Del Monte dominating the banana trade, even in most EU states.

The World Development Movement, staging a protest at the American embassy in London on Monday, claimed that Chiquita had a poor record in the treatment of its workers in Costa Rica, victimising those who wanted to join trade unions.

Ecuador welcomed the ruling as safeguarding its own banana industry and the jobs of 1.2 million workers, 10 per cent of its population.

Privately, commission officials admit that they will have to bow to the WTO's ruling and cannot hope to do more than delay for a few months the removal of barriers that will wipe out thousands of jobs and up to a fifth of the economies of some Caribbean islands.





# Torturer's confessions rock Croatia

Franjo Tudjman's government is under pressure to come clean on ethnic cleansing. **Ian Traynor** reports

THE most graphic and disturbing evidence to date of politically licensed Croatian death squads killing, torturing and raping ethnic Serb civilians transfixed Zagreb last weekend and put pressure on the government to come clean on its alleged sponsoring of atrocities during Croatia's secession from Yugoslavia.

Senior political figures close to President Franjo Tudjman's regime rushed to proclaim their innocence after a former paramilitary revealed details of atrocities he said were perpetrated against Serb civilians and opposition Croats, including women and children, during the Serb-Croat war of 1991.

"My name is Miro Bajramovic and I am directly responsible for the deaths of 86 people," the former paramilitary stated. "This is the fact that I go to bed with and wake up with every morning, if I can sleep at all. I personally killed 72 people, including nine women."

He said his special police unit, codenamed Autumn Rains, executed at least 400 Serb civilians during politically ordered ethnic cleansing operations in southwest and central Croatia in autumn 1991. He claimed his unit was answerable to the then interior minister, Ivan Vekic, and Tomislav Mercep, a former leading light in President Tudjman's ruling Croatian Democratic Union party.

Most of the killings took place at a primary school converted into a detention camp in Pakracka Poljana, central Croatia, he said.

"Then there is the field telephone and you plug a Serb into it. It is one-way electricity. It can't kill you, but it causes discomfort. Sometimes we inserted a five-ply wire into a prisoner's arse and left it there for several hours so he couldn't sit down.

"Their wounds were opened and salt and vinegar were poured on them. Usually, we didn't allow the bleeding to stop. And they had to learn to sing [the Croatian anthem] Lijepa Nasa."

Six years after the Serb-Croat war that preceded the Bosnian bloodbath, and two years after the Croatian campaign climaxed with the expulsion of tens of thousands of ethnic Serbs, Mr Bajramovic's explosive revelations are rocking the authorities.

They have triggered such public outcry that Croats may now confront the dirtiest aspects of their secessionist war, in which an estimated 10,000 people died.

After Mr Bajramovic's confessions last week to the opposition newspaper Feral Tribune, he and three other associates were detained. The authorities have promised to widen the investigation into his claims. But the senior political figures he named remain at large.

Mr Vekic — the former interior minister who has been investigated by the Hague war crimes tribunal along with Mr Mercep — described Mr Bajramovic, aged 40, as a drunken criminal and a liar.

Mr Mercep made veiled threats on Croatian television at the weekend. "If they keep attacking me, we might have to do something illegal," he said.

Zagreb human rights lobbyists, fearing hit squads could target Mr Bajramovic, called on President Tudjman to guarantee his safety.

Mr Mercep, a Bosnian Croat by birth who was a senior east Croatian police official in 1991 and rose up the political hierarchy, sued another newspaper over similar allegations in 1993. He received $19,000 in damages.

"Mercep knew everything," Mr Bajramovic said. "He knew about every liquidation because he was the commander. On several occasions, he told us 'clean up all that shit tonight'. This meant all the prisoners were to be liquidated.

He named Sinisa Rimac as a member of his paramilitary unit. In December 1991, Mr Rimac was acquitted by a Zagreb court of the abduction and murder of a Croatian Serb couple and their 12-year-old daughter. In 1995, President Tudjman awarded him one of the "highest decorations for heroic deeds in wartime". Mr Mercep, too, was decorated.

Mr Bajramovic also focused on executions in the southwestern town of Gospic, once home to 3,000 Serbs. "The orders for Gospic were ethnic cleansing. The leadership ordered that the number of Serbs in Gospic be reduced." In early 1992, President Tudjman told the Guardian that the Gospic killings may have been a foreign plot to discredit Croatia.

Mr Bajramovic said his unit killed between 90 and 100 Serb civilians there. The human rights body Helsinki Watch said 29 corpses, including those of nine women, were found and identified in December 1991. All had been shot, several were "brutally executed", one was bludgeoned to death by having his skull broken with a "heavy blunt object". "The bodies were doused with gasoline, and set on fire," it said.

In 1991, the Croatian authorities detained Mr Bajramovic and the other three men now held with him for the same alleged crimes. They were released without charge. Senior Croatian police in charge of the investigation told the Guardian at the time that the Helsinki Watch report was "probably based on rumour".

Last weekend police said Mr Bajramovic had failed to repeat his admissions in custody, fuelling suspicion that the police are under pressure to produce alibis for a self-confessed murderer.

Mr Bajramovic said he was admitting the atrocities out of guilt and envy. While he was penniless and had received no reward for his actions, former associates owned restaurant chains, and Mr Mercep owned several houses in Zagreb and on the Adriatic coast.

"Why don't I have anything?" Mr Bajramovic asked. "It's hard to burn the first house and kill the first man. After that, it becomes automatic."

# A life of devotion

## Mother Teresa

ONE OF Mother Teresa's most signal journeys in recent years was to Tirana, capital of Albania. After years of isolation the most systematically atheist state ever seen signalled its desire to rejoin the human race by inviting home the world's most famous Albanian.

Her heart, sustained by a pacemaker inserted in December 1989, finally gave out last week at the age of 87. Though she received the Nobel Peace prize in 1979, she was best known for her work among the poor and destitute of Calcutta. No doubt one day she will be known as St Teresa of Calcutta.

She had the distinction of being unofficially canonised in her lifetime. The annus mirabilis was 1975: she made the cover of Time magazine with the caption "Living Saints — Messengers of Hope for our Time", and Malcolm Muggeridge made a gushing television programme about her.

She became a familiar international figure in her white sari with blue edgings, the sandals, and the crucifix over the left shoulder. She was a conscience-prodding reminder of death in the streets of Calcutta and of Third World poverty.

She carried the message to high places. A fund-raising lunch presided over by Britain's Prince Philip tactfully consisted of one meagre course. At Downing Street she upbraided Margaret Thatcher about Londoners reduced to living in what she called "cardboard coffins". She found the poverty of the First World even more incomprehensible than that of the Third World. It was the sign of a callous society that had lost all sense of human community.

As staunchly anti-communist as Pope John Paul II, she responded to former President Mikhail Gorbachev's invitation to open a house in Moscow. Her sisters, known as the Missionaries of Charity, were among the first to arrive in Yerevan, Armenia, after the earthquake of 1988.

It was a far cry from the hill-top village near Skopje, then in the Ottoman empire, where Agnes Bojaxhiu was born four years before the outbreak of the first world war. At 18 she left for India to become a nun in the Congregation of Loreto. For 15 years she taught geography and history to middle-class girls at St Mary's High School, Entally, Bengal. She became headmistress and was also put in charge of a group of Indian sisters known as the Daughters of St Anne. They wore blue saris.

Then in September 1946, with communal strife plaguing India, she heard her "call within call" while on a train to Darjeeling. "The message was clear," she explained. "I was to leave the convent and help the poor while living among them. It was an order." But that was easier decided than done.

The local archbishop was soon convinced of her sincerity and determination. Always a practical woman, she learned nursing and dispensary work in Patna on the banks of the Ganges and began to gather her first helpers. The Vatican proved harder to persuade. Because there are too many already, new religious orders of women are discouraged.

Mother Teresa had to prove that she could gather recruits and keep them. For the first 10 years she was not allowed to work outside her own diocese, Calcutta. The work developed in three directions.

First, Kalighat, a hospice for the dying, was set up in the grounds of a Hindu temple. So as not to be overwhelmed, the sisters took in only those brought by the police — the most abandoned. More than 30,000 have passed through Kalighat and been helped to die well. Next came the Sishu Bhavan or children's home. Stories about babies being rescued from dustbins are not false. But more usually they were found abandoned in doorways or outside convent gates. Then a home for lepers was opened. It can take 200 — admittedly a mere fraction of India's 2 million lepers.

After 1960, the work began to expand throughout India, to Ranchi, Jhansi, Delhi and Bombay. In Delhi she got in touch with government leaders. A garlanded Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru came to visit her children's home. "Shall I tell you about my work?" she asked. "No," said Nehru, "I know about it — that is why I have come."

She became a figure on the national scene. Although life was being made hard for expatriate Christian missionaries, Mother Teresa seemed to transcend religious divisions and to belong to everyone. She never used denominational tests for anything. She was given a free travel pass on Indian railways and on Indian Airways.

Pope Paul VI's visit to Bombay in 1964 marked another stage in her progress. Paul heard about her work and donated to her the car he had used in India, a white Lincoln. It was raffled off. Her name was made. Mother Teresa was launched on the international scene.



Mother Teresa (left), pictured in Calcutta last month with Sister Nirmala, her successor as head of the Missionaries of Charity order
PHOTOGRAPH: JOY SHA[illegible]

But she had failures and disappointments. The Missionaries of Charity were thrown out of Colombo and Sri Lanka, and were snubbed in Belfast. They have worked in Africa, Jordan, among the Aborigines of Australia and the suburbs of Rome. But they did not "take" in Latin America.

Mother Teresa blamed this failure on liberation theologians who think they should deal with the unjust structures of society and not just tinker with the works. This was always the most basic objection to what she was doing: one should deal with the causes as well as the effects of poverty, and proclaim justice as well as charity.

Mother Teresa's reply was that the sisters were "outside politics" and that to change society, one had to begin somewhere. She began on the pavements of Calcutta, where there were 100,000 homeless. To her mind, a single act of love of gratitude was sufficient justification for all her work. She wanted to do — in the phrase picked by by Muggeridge — "something beautiful for God".

In 1976 the Missionaries of Charity celebrated their 25th anniversary. They numbered 1,133 and had 200 novices. In addition, there was the male congregation, the Missionary Brothers of Charity, who number about 160. For canonical reasons, they are independent, but they acted under Mother Teresa's inspiration.

No less important in her eyes are the hundreds of thousands of laypeople known as "co-workers" — the term comes from Mohandas Gandhi. There are 30,000 in Britain alone. They pray for the Missionaries of Charity and send them bandages and medicines. The circles expand still more to embrace the sick who offer their sufferings for the work and contemplatives who pray for it.

In 1976, Mother Teresa spoke at the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia to mark the American bicentennial. She appeared on the platform alongside Archbishop Helder Camara of Recife, north Brazil, the other contemporary Catholic folk-hero. Although not a great speaker, her tiny figure radiated great energy.

During the pontificate of Pope John Paul II she began to be exploited as "the good nun". She was invited to the 1980 synod on marriage to denounce abortion and contraception.

She told an Oxford conference in 1988 that she would never allow a child entrusted to her care to be adopted by a woman who had had an abortion or used contraceptives because, she said, "such a woman cannot love". Liberal she was not.

She went to Beirut in 1983, but could hardly do more than contemplate the ruins. She visited trouble spots and famine areas on behalf of the Pope, and was cast in the role of spokeswoman for papal causes. Feminist she was not.

She had a spirit of Franciscan poverty and a low opinion of herself. She compared herself to "God's pencil — a tiny bit of pencil with which he writes what he likes". Asked, "What next after Mother Teresa?" she answered simply: "After Mother Teresa, the Missionaries of Charity."

Mother Teresa resigned as superior general on the grounds of health on September 11, 1990. This was accepted by the Vatican. However, the electoral college was deadlocked, and there were fears of an Indian breakaway if English Sister Priscilla were elected. A saint is a hard act to follow.

**Peter Hebblethwaite**

Mother Teresa [Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu], born August 27, 1910; died September 5, 1997

# Towards a more beautiful city

## Aldo Rossi

IN 1971 Aldo Rossi, who has died aged 66, won a competition to design Modena's cemetery of San Cataldo. The result, not built for another decade, is one of this influential Italian architect's finest and most haunting buildings, a silent structure composed of apparently endless chaste colonnades punctuated by a simple, geometric ossuary.

Shortly before, Rossi had been involved in a car accident. And he died on Thursday last week following injuries sustained in another crash near his home in Milan 10 days earlier.

The first incident prompted him to observe in his A Scientific Autobiography (1981), that the human body was composed of fractured elements that needed constant reassembling. He thought much the same about the modern city. If only architects would join in his belief in an elemental, rationalism, then our fragmented and alienating cities could be reassembled as places of harmony and rigorous beauty.

Rossi's rationalism, a philosophy much influenced by Plato, was worked out in the books L'Architettura della cittá (1966) and Architettura razionale (1973), and in successive 1960s building projects. It posited the existence of archetypal building types much like Plato's ideal forms. These, according to Rossi, gave legitimacy to an eternally modern or rational architecture ideally expressed in the geometry of the square, cube, circle and cone.

For cemeteries, public squares and grandiose projects like the new Opera House in Genoa, this dreamlike and formalistic architecture made and continues to make sense.

Translated into social housing, however, it could seem perverse and icy to the point of being inhumane. Between 1970 and 1973 Rossi built a long block of white rendered reinforced concrete housing, Gallaratese 2, as part of the extensive Monte Amiata housing estate at the far end of one of Milan's tram lines.

"In my house designs," Rossi wrote, "I refer to the basic types of living which the architecture of the city has formed through a long process. On the basis of this analogy every corridor is a street, every court a city square, and a building reproduces the places of a city." In Rossi's urban creed, formalism triumphed over functionalism.

But, what sort of formalism and what sort of city? I went to see this housing when putting together a special Italian issue of the Architectural Review with my American colleague Lance Knobel in 1982. I think we were shocked by what we saw.

On paper, in books, the drawings of these houses had a hypnotic power. As compelling as a Boullee library or saltworks by Ledoux.

In truly harsh reality, they felt as if they belonged to the dead rather than the living. They didn't seem particularly rational, particularly with crude plumbing poking out of the ceiling of the eternally long colonnade that carried the flats on its desolate shoulders.

Rossi was charming to meet, working from an old, delicately pretty central Milan office. He charmed as well as taught several generations of students, including Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, the Swiss duo that is currently working on the conversion of Bankside Power Station, Southwark into the Tate Gallery of Modern Art.

Rossi was born in Milan and trained at Milan Polytechnic and after graduating developed his ideas in the design magazine Casabella. He became editor in 1964.

Although his reputation was international, as a teacher and theorist, only in the 1980s did Rossi win commissions outside Italy.

By the time of his death, he had offices in New York, The Hague and Tokyo as well as Milan and was the author of a hundred or so buildings. He is survived by a son, Fausto, and a daughter, Vera.

**Jonathan Glancey**

Aldo Rossi, architect, born May 3, 1931; died September 4, 1997





# Nuclear dumping at sea banned

**Paul Brown**

A FUNDAMENTAL change in the policy of dumping chemical and nuclear waste at sea was announced last week by the Environment Minister, Michael Meacher, removing from Britain the tag of the "Dirty Man of Europe".

For the first time in 20 years, Britain will be in line with the rest of Europe on disposal of oil rigs, nuclear submarines and a range of toxic chemicals. The "dilute and disperse" policy of the previous government has been abandoned.

Britain is giving up its opt-out from a ban on dumping low-level and intermediate radioactive waste at sea, and has agreed that polluting the sea with harmful chemicals should be stopped almost entirely by 2020.

The decision was announced as 15 European nations with coastlines or rivers discharging into the north-east Atlantic met in Brussels to discuss eliminating pollution from the North Sea.

The 15 countries, including Britain, are members of the Oslo-Paris convention (OSPAR), which deals with all discharges of waste into the sea from pipelines and rivers as well as the dumping of large objects.

The three main changes are: to rule out the dumping of nuclear waste at sea, including submarines and contaminated concrete from nuclear stations; to phase out chemical discharges, particularly man-made chemicals which interfere with sexuality; and to halt the dumping of oil and gas installations in the sea, except in exceptional circumstances.

Environment groups were delighted by the decision, which places new constraints on the Sellafield nuclear plant in Cumbria.

An Irish and Danish resolution will be put to the OSPAR meeting, demanding that nuclear waste discharges from Sellafield into the Irish Sea be reduced to virtually nothing. Particularly at issue are radioactive lobsters containing Technetium 99 that are currently 32 times over the danger limit imposed by the European Union.

Sarah Burton, of Greenpeace, said: "This must be a setback for Sellafield. It means it is politically achievable to end re-processing for ever."

The World Wide Fund for Nature was more pleased with the decision to phase out chemical discharges by 2020. Elizabeth Salter, pollution officer, said that phthalates, used to soften PVC, and Bisphenol A in drink cans would have to go. These chemicals are said to mimic the female hormone oestrogen and damage unborn children. Chemicals like cadmium, mercury and arsenic, which occur naturally, would also be reduced to "background levels". She said: "This is a breakthrough in a long campaign."

British Nuclear Fuels said there was as yet no technology to remove Technetium 99 from the waste stream, but that the company was exploring ways to do it.

David Culpin, for the Chemical Industries Association, said: "This is a challenging commitment by the British government. There will be costs of finding alternatives where substances are not acceptable, but we welcome Michael Meacher's comments about adopting a practical approach to identifying priorities and costs."

Shell, which was forced by Greenpeace to abandon plans to sink the Brent Spar oil storage buoy at sea, said it made no difference to its proposals. Five schemes were under consideration, including using the buoy as a coastal defence, lock gates, or a quay.

**Cleaner seas** The four breakthroughs

**Nuclear waste**
Liquid nuclear discharges from Sellafield to be reduced as low as technically achievable.
**Alternative**
Store nuclear waste on site
**Cost:** £10 million.

**Chemical waste**
Chemical discharges into the sea to be stopped "within a generation".
**Alternative**
Develop alternatives to man-made chemicals such as dangerous pesticides and plastics that mimic human hormones. Also, cut the use of other natural chemicals such as mercury and lead
**Cost:** £1 billion to £3 billion over 20 years.

**Nuclear submarines**
Option of dumping 11 redundant nuclear submarines into the sea, including four Polaris, ruled out
Also abandoned are plans to tow thousands of tonnes of mildly contaminated concrete from closed nuclear power stations out to sea for dumping.
**Alternative**
To build a massive underground depository for these objects plus the rest of the nation's nuclear waste
**Cost:** At least £2 billion, and it will take 30 years.

**Oil and gas rigs**
Seventy-two large oil and gas installations must now be disposed of on land, unless alternative uses can be found. Sea dumping only in exceptional circumstances
**Cost:** An extra £5 million to £15 million for each rig depending on size, over next 20 years

● All cars and homes should be subject to compulsory green ratings to help consumers save the planet, the independent but government-funded National Consumer Council said last week. In a report entitled Consumers And The Environment, the NCC said "eco-labelling" should first concentrate on fuel consumption but quickly be extended to cover wider environmental aspects such as vehicle exhaust emissions. Research indicated that 36 per cent of the population wanted to buy green products, yet there were not enough in the shops.

Public education was also needed to enable people to see problems in terms of the big issues, such as global warming and sustainable development, as well as those touching personal health, such as poor air quality and toxic waste.

# Illegal trade in CFC chemicals exposed

EVIDENCE of a large-scale illegal trade in CFC chemicals has been uncovered by a British environmental group, *writes Paul Brown*.

Between 6,000 and 20,000 tonnes of CFCs, or chlorofluorocarbons, worth up to $150 million, are smuggled into Europe each year, often through Britain, according to official estimates. CFCs damage the ozone layer and have led to a dramatic increase in skin cancer, and their production is banned in Europe.

The London-based Environmental Investigation Agency established a dummy company to buy illegal CFCs. Within days, Trans-Cool Trading was offered consignments of up to 100 tonnes from various companies — worth more than $800,000 on the black market. They came from plants in Russia and China, where production is allowed, and were furnished with false paperwork, via brokers in Germany, Poland and Spain.

The disclosure came days before the 10th anniversary meeting in Montreal of more than 100 countries which have agreed to phase out CFCs.

Smuggling is in danger of defeating efforts to mend the ozone layer, according to the agency. Use and manufacture of CFCs in Europe has been banned for three years; however, it is still legal to use recycled or reclaimed CFCs, or to import virgin CFCs for re-export to the developing world.

The world's phase-out had been expected to result in damage to the layer peaking in 2000 and then declining over 50 years so that the layer returned to normal. This may not now happen. As a result of depletion, more and more ultraviolet light is penetrating to the Earth's surface, and skin cancer is increasing dramatically. In Britain, 2,000 people now die each year, and 40,000 contract skin cancer, an increase of 70 per cent in less than 20 years. The report quotes John Gummer, the former environment secretary: "If you traffic in CFCs, you are, in a real sense, trafficking in the lives of our children."

Trans-Cool Trading located suppliers advertising on the Internet or named in court documents of smuggling cases in the United States. One company from China offered 100 tonnes of CFC-12 (used in industrial fridges) at $2,700 a tonne, one tenth of what it would fetch if sold in Britain on the black market for use in industrial fridges and air-conditioning, and a potential profit of $800,000. False recycling certificates were offered.

An agency spokesman, Steve Trent, said: "Within days of faxes to 20 suspect companies, we were being offered illegal CFCs. Frankly we were astonished how easy it was. In fact we are still being badgered by brokers trying to sell us the stuff."

The evidence has been passed to Customs and the European Union's central fraud office.

● Customs and Excise officers are having to destroy so much illegally imported alcohol and tobacco they are facing a large-scale environmental problem with its dispersal. "You can't just pour it away," said an official. "So we crush the bottles and put them in landfill sites."

The smuggling into Britain of duty-free alcohol and tobacco has become a growth criminal industry since 1993 when restrictions were lifted as part of the free market. As much as £1.5 billion may have been lost to the Exchequer.

No more Doctor No . . . Sean Connery joins Chancellor Gordon Brown at Rosyth naval base to promote the Government's campaign for a Yes/Yes vote on devolution for Scotland PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID MOIR

# Vote to tax Scots' resolve

## THE WEEK IN BRITAIN

**James Lewis**

THE PEOPLE of Scotland will know by the end of the week if they are to have their own parliament in Edinburgh. And, perhaps more importantly, they will have decided whether or not that parliament should have tax-varying powers.

In the run-up to a referendum on Thursday, opinion polls showed overwhelming support for a Scottish parliament, with 63 per cent in favour and only 21 per cent against. But those who favoured giving it tax-varying powers were only 7 points ahead of those against, and the gap seemed to be narrowing.

As the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, went north of the border to campaign for a Yes/Yes result, the Confederation of British Industry in Scotland countered with a nine-page report expressing its "very great concern" about the financial proposals, which would allow a devolved parliament to increase or decrease the basic rate of tax by a maximum of 3p.

The CBI said it feared not only a high-tax Scottish economy, but the problems that would arise in defining a "Scottish resident" for the purposes of tax. This, it complained, would lead to problems of tax avoidance. The Chancellor could only offer an assurance that no extra tax would be raised in the first two years of a Scottish parliament.

Labour's pro-devolution campaign was further marred by fresh allegations of sleaze in Glasgow, where 12 Labour councillors face suspension over claims that council positions were traded for overseas trips. This follows the suspension of two Labour MPs amid sleaze allegations in Renfrewshire.

The Scots will undoubtedly get their parliament, though the decision on taxation powers is less certain. There were, however, fears that the week-long moratorium on campaigning following the death of Diana could result in a low turn-out in the referendum and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the enterprise.

TONY BLAIR started the biggest consultation on education since the Butler reforms of 1944 when he staged a Downing Street "summit" of ministers and head teachers on proposals for legislation to raise standards in the schools. The meeting discussed measures to improve the quality of teaching and the motivation of teachers.

An education bill this autumn will include ambitious targets for literacy and numeracy, "education action zones", home-school contracts, and new forms of school organisation. The Education Secretary, David Blunkett, is sending a video outlining his proposals to every school and is inviting teachers, parents and governors to submit further ideas for inclusion in the bill.

Teaching unions, however, pointed out that at least 350 schools were starting this new term without a head teacher. David Hart, of the National Association of Head Teachers, said there had been a 50 per cent increase in the number of heads and deputies retiring over the last 12 months and a sharp fall in applications to replace them. He warned that, without "substantial" pay rises, the drive for improved standards could be fatally undermined.

Education fails test, page 18

WHEN the Trades Union Congress held its annual gathering in Brighton this week it was addressed for the first time since 1979 by a Labour Prime Minister, who had plenty to say to please his audience.

Mr Blair pointed to what the new Government has already done; it has signed the social chapter of the Maastricht treaty, which the Tories refused to accept; unions are allowed again at Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), where Mrs Thatcher had banned them; unions are to be given a right to recognition by employers in places where a majority of workers vote for it; and there will, eventually, be a national minimum wage, although it is unlikely to be as high as the unions demand.

The TUC's moderate general secretary, John Monks, also talked of a new, "grown-up" relationship between unions and government, though he was careful to add that even partners could not agree on everything. The unions would not return to their old, trouble-making ways, he promised. But neither would they show "blind loyalty".

The unions have lost much of their clout, and their membership, over the past 18 years, but they still remain the only force in the Labour party which Mr Blair cannot stamp on. And they and the Prime Minister know it.

BUTLIN'S, which has provided cheap and cheerful holidays for the masses for more than 60 years, is to be given a £139 million revamp in a belated bid to take the camps into the 21st century and to revive the flagging profits they make for the Rank Group, which bought them from Sir Billy Butlin in 1972.

It will not be the end of the road for the Butlin Redcoats, a route to stardom for Sir Cliff Richard, among others. But the camps at Minehead, Bognor Regis and Skegness will became all-year-round "family entertainment resorts" with 1,000 new apartments, and 5,300 refurbished chalets, beneath huge weatherproof canopies.

IF DIANA was the people's princess, then Professor Hans Eysenck, who has died aged 81, was the "people's psychologist", several of whose 50 books sold in millions. In the process he offended many, notably with his alleged views about race and intelligence, for which he was once physically attacked by unthinking students at the University of London.

# Report calls banks to account over Holocaust victims' cash

**Richard Norton-Taylor**

BRITISH banks are holding millions of pounds in dormant accounts which belonged to Holocaust victims, according to research published this week.

The report, by the Holocaust Educational Trust, also reveals how the post-war government refused to return other funds belonging to individual Jews persecuted by the Nazis and paid the money instead to British companies to compensate them for trading losses.

The value of unclaimed accounts still held by British banks could total £35 million — £700 million in today's money — according to the report.

Account holders or their heirs recovered their money only if they could prove they, or their relatives, had been victims of the Nazis under strict rules, unsympathetically enforced, the report shows.

People were refused access to the funds unless they had written-proof of the death of a parent, if they had been in a labour camp rather than a death camp, if they were trapped behind the Iron Curtain, or were too poor or sick to leave Germany.

John Foster, a Labour MP and international lawyer at the time, said that even ad hoc payments to individual claimants had been limited to "the few persons hardy enough to survive lengthy confinement in an actual death camp".

The Conservative MP Toby Low, now Lord Aldington, told the Commons as late as 1956 that "as regards hiding cases, it was not only persecuted Jews who went underground but sometimes criminals". He explained that the evidence of "hiding" often only came from the victim himself, with no corroboration.

The wartime government froze all foreign-held accounts under emergency powers. Clement Attlee's post-war Labour government gave priority to companies which had lost money as a result of Nazi occupation and/or subsequent Communist takeover.

The Foreign Office and the Department of Trade and Industry insisted they were treating the issue "extremely seriously". The British Bankers' Association said it would correct any "historic injustice."

The report, based on newly released and previously unpublished Public Record Office and other archives, is the latest move in a controversy which has hitherto concentrated on dormant accounts of Nazi victims held by Swiss banks.

# Railways give wrong kind of information

**Keith Harper**

**RAIL passengers are being left stranded and paying too much for tickets because the national inquiry service gives inaccurate information, the Consumers' Association reported last week.**

**Compensation payments for travellers inconvenienced by delays and cancellations are confusing and inconsistent, the report says. A survey of 588 travellers showed the service got correct details in only 41 out of 70 cases.**

**The report, in the CA's magazine Which?, discovered alarming inaccuracies in the advice delivered by the bureau set up by the 25 separate companies after privatisation. The service was privatised to give travellers co-ordinated information on services throughout Britain.**

**South West Trains, which had to cancel hundreds of trains earlier this year, was rated the poorest of the four large companies in giving information.**

**Only one in four passengers thought they received enough information about delays, and only one in three felt apologies were adequate.**

**Many timetables are padded with extra minutes built in between the last two stations, so a train which is late can make up time and still be judged punctual.**

**● Cuts of up to 25 per cent in some inner London commuter services with a reduction of 500 trains a week are to be introduced by Connex South Central later this month in spite of angry protests from passengers.**

# EU inquiry into deaths in custody

**Clare Dyer**

REPRESENTATIVES of the European watchdog on torture and degrading treatment were this week due to begin an unprecedented special visit to Britain prompted by fears that police officers are routinely escaping accountability for brutality or misconduct.

The five-strong delegation from the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) is expected to see among others, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Dame Barbara Mills.

The immediate catalyst is thought to be three cases which went to the High Court in July. The families of Shiji Lapite and Richard O'Brien, who died in custody and were found by inquest juries to have been unlawfully killed, and of Derek Treadaway, who confessed to robbery after being "suffocated to unconsciousness" by detectives with plastic bags, were challenging decisions by the Crown Prosecution Service not to prosecute the officers involved.

The DPP caved in over the two death cases and admitted the decisions were flawed. In the third, the court found Dame Barbara had acted unlawfully in deciding there was insufficient evidence to prosecute despite a statement by a High Court judge that Treadaway's treatment under interrogation had been "nothing less than torture".

The cases prompted the Government to set up an inquiry into the way prosecution decisions are reached in such cases. Dame Barbara agreed not to take future decisions over serious police assaults without seeking advice from a senior prosecution barrister.



## In Brief

**TWO oil workers have been blamed for the Piper Alpha oil disaster, in which 167 people died. In an historic judgment Lord Caplan ruled that the two men broke safety rules. His 1,500-page report contradicts the findings of the official inquiry, which blamed the oil company, Occidental, for the tragedy.**

**THREE Danish neo-Nazis were convicted for their part in a parcel bomb campaign targeting British celebrities and masterminded by the British extreme right group, Combat 18.**

**AN EXPLOSION wrecked a house in Brecon, mid-Wales, killing two men. Police later arrested several people in connection with the theft of plastic explosives from a nearby army barracks, but ruled out any terrorist link.**

**A CLEAN-UP of Doncaster's Labour council moved forward with the publication of a scathing internal report alleging bullying, misconduct and criminal activity. The report was handed to South Yorkshire police.**

**LIFE expectancy for people in lower social classes has stopped rising for the first time in peacetime Britain since the Victorian era, government statisticians said.**

**YOUNG black people regard mental health services as "very dangerous" because they are at high risk of being diagnosed schizophrenics, put on powerful sedatives and detained compulsorily, according to the Health Minister, Paul Boateng.**

**A CONCORDE airliner with 65 passengers on board was involved in a near-miss shortly after leaving New York.**

**IMMIGRANT welfare groups called for changes to rules on the supervision of deportees from Britain following the "brutal" treatment of a Nigerian who was brought onto a regular passenger flight kicking and screaming, and handcuffed to private security guards.**

**LONDON'S cheap hotels are overrun with a virulent strain of bed bug, *Cimex lecularius*, according to the Good Hotel Guide. In a savage indictment of standards, the guide said the capital had "some of the dingiest hotels of any Western city".**

**A POLICE officer involved in renewing the gun licence of Dunblane killer Thomas Hamilton resigned after spending a year on sick leave.**

**JEFFREY BERNARD, the Spectator columnist who became a legend in his own lunchtime for his Soho drinking habits, dissolute life and acerbic wit, has died aged 65.**



# Sinn Fein 'will compromise'

**Martin Kettle and Ed Vulliamy**

GERRY ADAMS last week began his first visit to the United States since the IRA's latest ceasefire with the rare claim that Sinn Fein would be willing to make political compromises in the search for a lasting peace agreement in Northern Ireland.

Speaking to journalists at the National Press Club in Washington, the Sinn Fein president said his party would enter the Northern Ireland peace talks on September 15 "in a spirit of generosity, accommodation and a preparedness to compromise".

Sinn Fein intended to take part in the talks in order to get "as far along the road to our political goals as possible". But he added that its approach would be based on "compromise, compromise, compromise, compromise".

Mr Adams later conceded that a united Ireland would be an "unlikely" outcome of the talks, and that it was unrealistic for Sinn Fein to table British withdrawal as part of their agenda. He said Sinn Fein recognised a "democratic peace settlement" to be the goal of the talks.

But he refused to give a direct answer to the question which was posed for him by the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, in an article in the Guardian timed to coincide with the Sinn Fein publicity offensive. Ms Mowlam wrote that "the key question now for Sinn Fein is whether it is prepared to accept an outcome arrived at through negotiations and consent, even if the agreement falls short of its ideals".

Mr Adams said that Sinn Fein would "sell whatever we would agree to" but cautioned: "Don't expect us . . . to lower our expectations or to in any way dilute or diminish our very legitimate goals even before we go into negotiations."

Sinn Fein's chief negotiator, Martin MacGuinness, added to the confusing signals being sent out by Sinn Fein when he visited a trio of IRA prison escapees in their cells at Pleasanton prison near San Francisco. Terrance Kirby, Kevin Artt and Pol Brennan are awaiting extradition to Britain, having been part of the 1983 Maze jail break.

Artt is convicted of murder, and Brennan and Kirby of possessing explosives. All three are also convicted of participating in an IRA attack.

In contrast to Mr Adams's conciliatory tone, Mr MacGuinness has stuck closer to Sinn Fein's roots, calling for the release of the men.

He said that freeing the three San Francisco prisoners and others who had "sought refuge" in the US would "send a powerful message to the British about the peace process". And in an interview with the Boston Sunday Herald, he said that he was looking for British withdrawal as an outcome to the talks.

# Earl denounces royals and media

Guardian Reporters

EARL SPENCER made a bitter attack on the press and the royal family in his funeral address in Westminster Abbey.

The earl's tribute to "the unique, the complex, the extraordinary and irreplaceable Diana" damned the House of Windsor for its failure to love her and damned the press for torturing "the most hunted person of the modern age".

In a speech that also acknowledged many of the less fairytale aspects of his sister's life, Earl Spencer made cutting references to "blood family", to the dangers of duty, and to the princess's bizarre royal life which he said often plunged Diana into despair.

His five-minute address will be one of the starkest memories in an extraordinary week. In the future, his words will be the mark of whether the royal family has progressed towards an open, more popular style or fallen back on the stiffness of tradition and silence.

Using language heavy with symbolic resonance and clearly designed to contrast the Spencer and Windsor families, Earl Spencer vowed to Diana that he would protect the princes William and Harry from both the media and joyless royal protocol: "We will not allow [your sons] to suffer the same anguish [at the hands of the press] that used regularly to drive you to tearful despair. And . . . I pledge that we, your blood family, will do all we can to continue the imaginative and loving way in which you were steering these two exceptional young men, so that their souls are not simply immersed by duty and tradition, but can sing openly as you planned."

In spite of subsequent denials that the Spencer family wanted a posthumous reinstatement of the princess's Royal Highness title, the earl recalled the fractious relationship between Diana and Buckingham Palace at the time of her divorce, when he said that Diana was "someone with a natural nobility who was classless and who proved in the last year that she needed no royal title to continue to generate her own particular brand of magic".

Rounding on the British press, which Earl Spencer has in the past described as "the biggest cancer in society", he said: "I don't think she ever understood why her genuinely good intentions were being sneered at by the media, why there appeared to be a permanent quest on their behalf to bring her down . . . My own explanation is that genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum."

Referring to Diana's "deep feelings of unworthiness", the earl said Diana recognised that it was her "innermost feelings of suffering that made it possible for her to connect with the constituency of the rejected", adding that despite her bizarre and troubled life "she remained intact, true to herself".

The constitutional reform group, Charter 88, said the earl's remarks about the royal family "summed up the mood of the public".

Ben Pimlott, the Queen's biographer, said Earl Spencer had saved the day from tumbling into mawkishness. "His attack on the media was biting, tight and effective. Whether the newspapers will take any notice is another matter: they seem beyond shame."

The Prince of Wales vowed to protect the privacy of his sons William and Harry following Earl Spencer's criticisms. Royal sources said the prince was angered by Earl Spencer's vow that Diana's "blood family" would ensure the children would receive a balanced upbringing and its implication that Charles is unable to perform the task.

Comment, page 12



Diana's coffin is carried up the nave of Westminster Abbey after a procession through central London watched in near silence by more than a million people. The carriage bearing the coffin was followed by Earl Spencer, Prince Philip, Prince Charles, the princes William and Harry and 500 representatives of charities favoured by Diana PHOTO: JOHN REARDON

### Pathologist says driver may not have been drunk

Professor Peter Vanezis, a pathologist hired by the Al Fayed family, said that the evidence advanced so far that Henri Paul, the driver of the car in the fatal accident, was three times over the drink-drive limit was inconclusive. His claim was supported by video footage from the Ritz Hotel, which gives no indication of Paul, who was not licensed to drive powerful limousines, being drunk.

### Paparazzi charged

Eight photographers and a motorcyclist who were following Diana's limousine when it crashed are under formal investigation by police in a manslaughter inquiry. But sources close to the investigation said a preliminary report concluded that they did not directly cause the accident.

### Press reviews photo policy

The British Press Complaints Commission launched a review of the activities of the international paparazzi. Several national newspapers said they would revise their policies on usage of paparazzi photographs.

### Fund set to reach £100m

Buckingham Palace announced the creation of a Princess of Wales memorial fund so that donations to Diana's favourite charities could be made to a central location. It is expected to raise up to £100 million.

### Funeral watched by 31.5m

Diana's funeral service was watched by a record British television audience of 31.5 million people.

### Conspiracy theories abound

The proliferation of elaborate conspiracy theories about Diana's death continues. Posited scenarios include a drug-related killing, a Secret Service plot, murder by land-mine manufacturers or even a faked death. Libya's Colonel Gadafy joined in when he condemned the "arranged crash" as "anti-Islamic and anti-Arab".

# Nation not at peace

Continued from page 1

their characteristic poses: the Queen sphinx-like; the Prince of Wales as if broken; William masking his feelings with what looked like boredom.

But the sound kept changing: I Vow To Thee My Country came out rather uncertainly; there was a turgid version of Psalm 23; and Tony Blair, taking his control of the significant pause close to the point of self-parody. Then Elton John singing his new version of "Candle in the Wind", professionalism carrying him through when everyone insisted he would break down.

It was at this moment that we heard the sound which several writers have compared to distant rain. That is precisely what it was like. It was the crowd in Parliament Square applauding. Inside there was one applaud, hastily stopped. No one claps at funerals. Or rather, no one used to clap at funerals.

Then came Earl Spencer. Let's be cool about this. His address contained elements of disingenuousness bordering on mendacity. To describe Diana versus the tabloids as an encounter between "genuine goodness" and total evil is a grotesque distortion of a complex relationship. When he warned against sanctifying her memory, he said that was wrong, but only because of her "mischievous sense of humour". Even in a funeral oration, it is customary to paint over the cracks more convincingly than that.

The urge for vengeance was one of Diana's characteristics, and it runs in the family. This was a brilliantly crafted oration. Like his dead sister and unlike the Windsors, the earl knows the power of word, gesture, and symbol. He despises those who convey the symbols to the masses. He has not resolved the paradox.

Then came the rain again. And this time it spread inside and up the nave. William and Harry clapped; Charles was seen to tap his thigh; Hyde Park erupted.

This was no longer a funeral. It had gone way beyond that. If Earl Spencer had called for immediate insurrection, they would have marched. But it was time to go home and resume being British.

The body of a beautiful, gifted, kind, flawed, fated human being lies on an island at the Spencer estate near Althorp. A huge proportion of the population believes she is Diana, Saint and Martyr, victim of the wicked Windsors. She may be at peace. The nation is not.

# Queen breaks protocol and speaks to nation

Kamal Ahmed

IN a remarkable break with tradition, the Queen paid tribute to the Princess of Wales on the eve of her funeral in an unprecedented television and radio address to the nation from the balcony of Buckingham Palace.

Dressed in black, the Queen said she was speaking from the heart and that Diana was an "exceptional and gifted human being".

It was one of the most relaxed appearances the Queen has made on television. Regal pomp and ceremony were eschewed for a simple reading to camera before a backdrop of the crowds and thousands of floral tributes outside the palace gates.

"We have all been trying in our different ways to cope," she said in the three-minute broadcast. "It is not easy to express a sense of loss, since the initial shock is often succeeded by a mixture of other feelings: disbelief, incomprehension, anger — and concern for those who remain.

"We have all felt those emotions in these last few days. So what I say to you now, as your Queen and as a grandmother, I say from my heart."

The Queen said the royal family had spent the week trying to come to terms with the death. "I want to pay tribute to Diana myself. She was an exceptional and gifted human being. In good times and bad, she never lost her capacity to smile and laugh, nor to inspire others with her warmth and kindness.

"I admired and respected her — for her energy and commitment to others, and especially for her devotion to her two boys."

She said that there were many lessons to be learned from Diana's life and from the "extraordinary and moving" reaction to her death, leading to speculation that the royal family may maintain a more open policy.

Stung by criticism that the monarchy had appeared aloof following the princess's death, the Queen's broadcast was one of a series of gestures made by Buckingham Palace which revealed a fundamental break with the tradition that protocol dictated how the royal family should act.

Various members of the family arrived in London from Balmoral a day earlier than planned to participate in walkabouts among the crowds outside Buckingham Palace, Kensington Palace, which was Diana's former home, and St James's Palace, where Diana's body lay before the funeral.

And in what seemed a blatant capitulation to public and media pressure, the palace flew the Union flag at half mast for the first time in history during the weekend of the funeral.

Royal commentators described the moves as "cataclysmic".

"You have to admire her courage in circumstances that are very painful and difficult," said Lord Blake, the constitutional historian.

The palace said the decision to make the television address was not connected to newspaper headlines accusing the Queen of sticking too closely to protocol.

A Downing Street spokesman said the new arrangements were a further sign that the royal family was responding positively and imaginatively to the extraordinary outpouring of grief.





# The making of the myth of Saint Diana

What happens after the people's beatification? **David Cannadine** believes that history has been kind to the monarchy. But can it remain untouched by the death of a princess who won so many hearts?

THE DEATH of Diana, Princess of Wales, from a road accident at the relatively tender age of 36, has left unmoved and untouched only the hardest of hearts and the meanest of spirits. During a period of mourning the like of which Britain has never witnessed before, this has been overwhelmingly the general verdict.

Even so, the depth and intensity of the reaction to her death have taken many people by surprise. World leaders have paid their tributes: among them the prime ministers of Australia and New Zealand, the president of France, the United Nations secretary-general, and Nelson Mandela. In the United States, what would otherwise have been an uneventful Labor Day weekend was transformed into a non-stop news bulletin, as journalists were called back from the beach to file their copy, and top television presenters were sent to London to cover the story first-hand. But inevitably it is in Britain that the response has been most pronounced. Flags flew at half mast, normal television schedules were abandoned, the Prime Minister spoke emotionally about "the people's princess", and last Saturday there was the funeral in Westminster Abbey, which has rightly been described as "a unique tribute to a unique person".

These official reactions have been far surpassed by those of the ordinary people whose princess Tony Blair proclaimed Diana to have been. In the Boston hotel where I was staying on the weekend she died, I was offered condolences by porters, waiters and fellow guests. It was the same in New York, where I only had to open my mouth for expressions of sympathy to come rolling in from complete strangers. As for Britain, it seems as though Diana in death has finally slain the stiff upper lip with which she had been so uncomfortable in life. On scores of radio and television interviews, men and women have wept openly and unashamedly. Thousands have queued, by day and by night, to sign the books of condolence at St James's Palace, where her coffin reposed. There, at Kensington Palace, and outside Buckingham Palace itself, the gateways and lawns have been knee deep in flowers, many with touching inscriptions from those who had never known Diana personally, but who regarded her as a true and real and close friend.

Inevitably, commentators have been searching for comparable deaths, and just as inevitably they have found them. Not since the death of Princess Grace of Monaco in 1982 has a royal car accident had such tragic consequences. Not since John Lennon was shot in 1980 has the death of a Briton evoked such a world-wide response. Not since Lord Mountbatten was murdered by the IRA in 1979 has a member of the royal family come to such a violent end. Not since Winston Churchill died in 1965 have so many Britons mourned one of their own so deeply and so sorrowingly. Not since the assassination of John F Kennedy in 1963 have youth and hope and good looks and charm been so cruelly and devastatingly snuffed out. And not since their grieving forebears laid their wreaths at the Cenotaph in Whitehall in July 1919 have so many ordinary Britons paid such spontaneous homage in their capital city.

There is something to be said for each of these comparisons: but not, in truth, very much. In each case, they mislead more than they illuminate. Unlike Princess Grace, Diana was not a celebrity in her own right before she married, with an accomplished career in film already to her credit. Unlike John Lennon, she was not a creative figure who helped transform the popular culture of an entire generation. Unlike Lord Mountbatten, she had not held a succession of high-ranking military and proconsular posts. Unlike Winston Churchill, she was not the saviour of her country in its darkest and finest hour. Unlike John F Kennedy, she had been neither president of the United States, nor (albeit only briefly) the hero of the world's hopes. And while her death was beyond doubt a waste and a tragedy, there had been three-quarters of a million such wasted, tragic British deaths during the course of the first world war.

The fact that comparisons such as these were repeatedly made last week suggests a lack of proportion remarkable even by contemporary journalistic standards. Indeed, at one level it is the media that have inflated this personal tragedy into the world-wide story it has become.

Yet while the reaction to Diana's death has been to some extent media-driven, that is clearly not the whole truth. Her death, even more than her life, seems to have caught and intensified a certain popular mood. Many of those who have been most upset by it seem to be among the marginalised in society, the outcasts of Thatcherite Britain, those with whom she herself came most publicly to identify: the poor of the inner cities, people with Aids, immigrants feeling the sting of racism, battered women, deserted wives. To them, Diana seems to have offered some sort of hope — even if it was only the general re-assurance that she cared for them, and felt their pain. A cynic would say that she was no more than the self-appointed high priestess of the contemporary cult of victimhood. A more generous verdict would be that these were the very people of whose hearts she was the undoubted queen.

This suggests a more plausible historical comparison than those which have generally been drawn this past week. In some ways, the figure she most closely resembles is Princess Caroline, the unhappy wife of the Prince of Wales who eventually, in 1820, became King George IV. Like Diana, Caroline was drawn into an arranged marriage with an unfaithful husband, which went rapidly and publicly wrong. Like Diana, she was cast out from the royal court and obliged to make her own life in her own way. Like Diana, she was determined to go down fighting. And like Diana again, she was seen by many as the victim of a harsh, overbearing establishment, which won her great popular support from the marginalised and disaffected, especially wronged women, and those who resented the long period of Tory dominance. In her own day, Caroline was every bit as much the "people's princess" as Diana.

But as with Caroline, this picture of Diana as an ordinary woman, as "on our side", was not entirely plausible. She was the daughter of a rich aristocrat, married the eldest son of one of the wealthiest women in the world, and her divorce settlement was reckoned in millions of pounds. The Spencer earldom dates back to the mid-18th century, by comparison with which the House of Windsor seems distinctly parvenu. Her last hours were spent at the Ritz hotel in Paris and in a Mercedes, in the company of a man whose father is a billionaire. These are not the circumstances of ordinary people. On the contrary, Diana lived a jet-set life, of private planes, speedboats and fast cars. This was a high-risk existence, and others before her had also been destroyed by it, notably Prince William of Gloucester in a flying accident in 1972, and the second husband of Princess Caroline of Monaco, who was killed when his speedboat capsized.

Yet for all her wealth, privilege and connections, Diana *did* seem to many to be an authentically anti-establishment figure, and this was not only on account of her identification with those at the bottom of society. For her youthful, spontaneous, warm-hearted, media-wise style made the rest of the royal family, and thus the whole institution of monarchy, seem by comparison unacceptably Victorian, middle-aged and unglamorous.

Here again, another comparison suggests itself: with the Prince of Wales who later became Edward VIII, abdicated to marry Wallis Simpson, and eventually became the sad and embittered Duke of Windsor. Like Diana, he had once been a young, glamorous figure, who in his heyday was the focus of much popularity. Like Diana, he seemed to promise a new-style, new-generation monarchy, more modern and approachable, and more in tune with the lives and expectations of ordinary people. Like Diana, he was disapproved of by crusty and reactionary courtiers, who thought him frivolous, self-indulgent and irresponsible. Like Diana, he regarded personal happiness as being at least as important as royal duty. And like Diana again, it was only in death that the royal family rushed to reclaim and embrace him as one of their own.

What conclusions might we draw from these comparisons, as they relate to the debate about the future of the British monarchy, which has inevitably been re-ignited in the aftermath of Diana's death? Two views seem to have been emerging. The first, and the more popular, contends that if the royal family is to survive the loss of its most loved member, it will have to learn the lessons she taught, and become less remote and more accessible: Diana may be dead, but the Diana monarchy is the only plausible future model. Alternatively, it has been suggested that by popularising a new candid and confessional royal style, part Oprah Winfrey, part Susie Orbach, Diana did the monarchy untold damage, and that the best thing now would be to draw a line under this regrettable aberration, and return to the traditional, restrained way of doing things that has served the institution so well for most of this century.

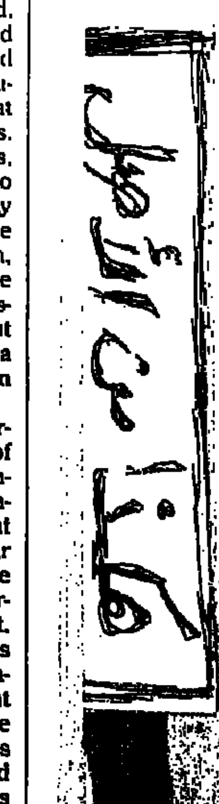
At first glance, and in opposition to last week's conventional wisdom, the examples of Queen Caroline and Edward VIII suggest that the second of these routes is more likely to be taken than the first. In their day, Caroline and Edward enjoyed widespread public affection and support. But their long-term effect on the British monarchy was minimal. It survived, but they did not. Caroline died in 1821, and soon became a forgotten figure, while Edward VIII was followed by George VI, who did everything he could to stress continuity with the formal regime of his father, George V. From this perspective, it may well be that Diana will be remembered as no more than a colourful but ephemeral celebrity, part Cinderella, part Eva Peron.

**Diana leaves behind two sons, one of whom is destined one day to be King of England. In a very real sense she will live on in him**

But there is one significant way in which these comparisons mislead. The Duke of Windsor sired no progeny, and Caroline's only child, Princess Charlotte, pre-deceased her in 1817. One reason Edward and Caroline exerted so little influence beyond the grave was that they left behind no descendants. But Diana leaves behind two sons, one of whom is destined one day to be King of England. He may or may not adopt his mother's style. But he will always remain visibly her son, and for years to come there will be many people who will find it impossible to contemplate him without seeing the image of his mother. In a very real sense, she will live on in him.

Nor is this all. More than a generation ago, the death and funeral of John Kennedy (and here that comparison is apt) marked the beginning of the Camelot myth that endured intact almost down to our own times — a partial version of the truth, but one which for years carried almost everything before it. And who can doubt that the events of last week have marked the beginning of the myth of Diana as saint and martyr, of which essentially the same ought to be said? From this perspective, her funeral concluded and consolidated a public-relations triumph far surpassing anything she achieved in life: we shall always remember the day she died and the day she was buried; her grave will soon become a place of pilgrimage; the vacant plinth in the corner of Trafalgar Square need no longer lack a statue, and books will cascade from the presses with haunting, bitter-sweet pictures recalling her life.

Diana, Princess of Wales is dead; but Diana, Queen of Hearts, yet lives.



# Media, monarchy and the earl

AN EXTRAORDINARY week in British history is over. Some of the anger is spent, some of the grief stemmed. Quieter reflection is now possible on the issues thrown up by a week of volatile and intense passion.

The scope and terms of the coming debate could hardly have been expressed more starkly or more simply than by Earl Spencer in his tribute to Princess Diana last Saturday. His oration to his sister was little more than 1,200 words long and was fuelled by the bitterness of his loss. But his eloquent J'accuse launched an attack on two powerful estates — the media and the monarchy — which will compel a response. The wave of applause which rippled from the crowd into Westminster Abbey and through the heart of the congregation showed that Earl Spencer had hit the right targets with his quietly venomous oratory.

The burden on proof is now on the subjects of his broadside. The media must prove that it deserves to be — and can be — trusted with its own regulation. All of us who work in press or television must prove that we can understand the difference between private and public, and that we can behave with appropriate restraint and sensitivity. The monarchy must prove something more fundamental. Never before in its long history has it been clearer that the royal family rules by public consent alone. Seldom before have the foundations for that public consent looked feebler.

Anger is a blunt instrument. Earl Spencer's attack on the media was particularly broadbrush in its sweep. As a former television reporter he knows better than most that there are many forms of media, some with immense power for good, some with untold potential for evil. His sister certainly appreciated the possibilities of harnessing the potential of television and the press — yes, even the hated tabloids — to good ends. For a parallel illustration you have only to look at the history of Mother Teresa, who worked in relative obscurity until "discovered" by Malcolm Muggeridge for a television programme he made in 1969.

Granada Television, for which the earl worked as a reporter, has a long and honourable history of reporting matters in the public interest. If the earl is to play a part in the coming debate he must show that he has a rounded sense of the arguments surrounding these issues when it comes to making life harder for those — in his words — at the "opposite end of the moral spectrum". It is all very well for America — with its First Amendment protection of freedom of speech — to have privacy legislation. It is quite another matter to impose a privacy law on Britain, with its lack of any constitutional guarantees and with its restrictive and punitive libel laws.

But the onus is on editors and, particularly, proprietors to show that they can continue to be trusted to police the borders between what should be private and what should be public. The response of the industry so far has been to announce an inquiry into the foreign paparazzi. That is well and good, but it is hardly enough. There needs to be a larger and more searching debate about the way in which news has come to be treated as any other commodity.

In their hearts some of the leading players in the media care as little for the regulation of information as they do for any other kind of regulation. If there is a market for news or pictures they want to be in it. Whether the market is for topless darts, weeping princesses or smudged pictures over the walls of the psychiatric hospital the market must be satisfied. The proprietors who distantly call the shots are not greatly bothered about the cultures thus affected and do not give much thought to the people caught up in the frenzy of the market. The market simply rules.

That is one debate started by Earl Spencer, and it is one in which all who work in the media must engage. There has so far been a concerted silence on the part of tabloid proprietors. Some tabloid editors are rumoured to be considering a counterattack on the broadsheet press, intent on proving that that we, too, are culpable — and guilty, moreover, of hypocrisy in our handwringing. It is not clear what such a counterattack would prove, except that the problem is worse than suspected.

Monday's Independent announced that it will never again publish pictures of the young princes in private situations. That is a clear and welcome lead from a thoughtful editor. We have ourselves within the past week renewed our guidelines over the use of pictures that have clearly been obtained in intrusive circumstances and are clearly not in the public interest. It is right that every sector of the media should think hard about its responsibilities and duties.

The other debate which springs from Earl Spencer's tribute concerns the very future of the monarchy. It is ironical that the stiletto thrusts which have wounded it so should have come from within — from the Old Etonian bearer of an earldom dating back to 1765 whose sister married the future king. In a few sentences the earl managed to imply that royal titles were meaningless baubles and that the House of Windsor was drastically ill-suited to bringing up the future king and his brother as rounded, sentient human beings. He pledged the Spencers — the "blood family" — to steering the boys to fulfilled adulthood rather than a destiny by which their souls would be "immersed by duty and tradition".

That promise begs many questions. It is not immediately clear how the earl will make good his undertaking to superintend the development and protection of his young nephews. He himself has chosen to make his home in South Africa, while one of his sisters is married into the heart of the very family against which he rails with such evident bitterness. It is questionable whether the recent history of the Spencer family suggests that it is notably less dysfunctional than the Windsors. But the ocean of applause at the end of his oration suggested that the earl had tapped into the deeper feelings of the public at the end of a week which had seen the senior members of the royal family uncertain how to respond to the massive outpouring of emotion from their subjects.

It would be silly to deny that the Windsor family felt deep and normal grief at the death of Diana. Calls for them to leave Balmoral or parade their grief in public were frequently crass and insensitive. But there was something about their distance and invisibility last week which caused disquiet in the public psyche. Diana's death froze in stark relief the contrast between her openness, their closedness; her warmth, their coldness; her naturalness, their stiffness; her modernity, their tradition; her spontaneity, their protocol; her approachability, their remoteness; her friends, their court. Some of this was unfair, some of it wide of the mark. But it was what people thought.

Lifelong monarchists queued to confess their doubts to television interviewers. She was the only one worth anything. Prince Charles could never be king now. They would have to skip a generation to William. The Queen's broadcast on the eve of the funeral may have calmed some of the doubters. Others will have found her careful words and precise tones unequal to the occasion. One New York Times writer described her as "like the last ice cube trying to melt". She meant well, but she seemed imprisoned by history, circumstance and time.

Walter Bagehot feared letting in daylight upon magic. He could not have predicted the effect of bursting flashbulbs and the dazzle of halogen upon magic. Last week we saw a troubled and bewildered family fumbling to do the right thing in response to a barely-understood clamour. We did not see a family which in some mystic sense stood for us, or which interpreted the nation to itself. We saw no reflection of ourselves at all. Those who imagine that Prince William — a 15-year-old boy about whom we know almost nothing — is best placed to rescue this family and institution not only condemn him cruelly young to assume a near-intolerable burden. They also make a nonsense of the principles of heredity upon which monarchy is based.

The Queen has promised to learn lessons from the life and death of Diana. Prince Charles is evidently a sensitive and decent man who will seek to redeem both himself and his family through the good works to which he is already devoted. But something has happened over these past two weeks which may go beyond that understandable human urge for redemption. Ultimately it is not about whether Charles is a good man or a bad man, a strong man or a weak man. It is not about whether he can marry, or whether William better fits the zeitgeist. It is about the institution itself.

We surprised ourselves last week in our response to Diana's death. We realised that — at some emotional level we cannot yet fathom — we had changed. But in amongst the grief and the confusion there appeared to be a glimmering recognition that we are, after all, citizens rather than subjects. Diana, said her brother, "needed no royal title". She had a natural nobility. She was classless in her compassion and humanity. The monarchy may not have wanted her, he seemed to be saying, but she proved she didn't need them. And that, for the millions she touched in life and in death, may prove to be her most lasting lesson of all.

# It wasn't grief – it was wanting to belong

Decca Aitkenhead

WITH every hour that passed last week, according to one newspaper editorial, "the public grief for Diana became more palpable". We could "read it in the heartfelt messages", and we could "see it in the tidal waves of flowers". Casting around in the bewilderment for truths, there was one thing on which Britain could agree: the nation was grieving.

As the week moved on, so another consensus developed. Commentators awed by the astonishing response to Diana's death asked what it could mean, and declared it a testament not merely to the depth of public grief, but to a transformation in British character. No longer the land of choked reserve, we were a nation at ease with displays of emotion. In short, a truly modern country. It was a beguiling account, and one I was well-disposed to accept. It was only when you walked past Kensington Palace yourself, or watched the queues as they filed down the Mall, that the exact opposite became apparent. The impulse driving those crowds was a powerful and important emotion. But I do not think it was grief, and it was anything but modern.

Most of the millions made the journey not in grief-stricken mourning for a woman they never knew, but from a desire to locate themselves in the spot where history would for once reach out to them, as they huddled in their ones and twos, pluck them up, and bring them inside, gathered together in a collective historic experience.

We were told that the queues to sign the condolence books were unreasonably long, and more effort should have been made to shorten them. And yet, as you watched them queue in the drizzle through the night, it was clear that the longer the queues got, the happier everyone was. Had it been possible to pop down and sign your name in 10 minutes in your lunch hour, I'm not sure anyone would have done it.

The stories of people bonding in the queue were reported as a touching sideshow, when in fact they were the real story. People were queuing precisely in order to get cold and wet and tired, and to meet Sue and Karen from Bury, and share their bulimia stories, and swap pictures of their kids, and feel like they'd known each other all their lives, and promise to keep in touch when at last they'd signed their names and could go back to their real lives. What drew them there was some longing to play a part in a momentous occasion.

The public expression of what we've mistaken for grief also fulfils another function, and this was evident on the faces of all those gathered at the palaces. There was at last a chance for us to demonstrate both to each other and ourselves that we are not selfish individuals leading nuclear lives, and that we still yearn to do something good and right.

In a time when do-gooder has become a tabloid insult, when charity workers are assumed to be con merchants, and Scout leaders to be paedophiles, this simple opportunity to be publicly, incontrovertibly good was seized. Discreet pleasure was there in the same face everyone outside St James's Palace put on — sober and awed, but also silently redeemed. The inordinate public pleasure taken in the picture of a punk with a wreath — Look! even social deviants care! Maybe we're OK after all — was equally revealing.

This was not the same as grief. Grief in bereavement is a searing, stomach-twisting agony which consumes all; the "grief" of those giving tender quotes to tabloid Di dedication hotlines was the sort of sorrow you can indulge and even encourage, because it makes you feel involved in something special, and reassures you that you are, as you'd hoped, a caring and empathetic human being. It was grief with the torment taken out — a kind of low-cal, no-pain grief-lite, which leaves a warm glow where aching emptiness would be.

So it was very hard to see what right the public and the media had to condemn the manner in which Diana's family chose to grieve. The royals were among the small number of people actually enduring the real, tortured pain of personal bereavement, and were entitled to bear their grief in whatever way they wished. For us to have presumed that, by sheer weight of bouquets and candles and headlines, we earned the right to demand that they grieved in a style of which we approved, was as misplaced as if Charles had demanded that all rhyming tributes were removed from the palace gates, because he disapproves of sentimental tack.

DOES all this mean that the public are a bunch of hammy old hypocrites? I don't think it does at all. The absence of authentic public grief should in no way be taken for emotional inadequacy; it would, in fact, be as ill-judged to accuse the crowds of feeling nothing, as it is to mistake them for mourners. Nor do I think, as others are starting to suggest, that The World Has Gone Mad. The motives which brought most people to the palace were entirely legitimate; more legitimate, in fact, than hysterical grief for a woman none of them had ever met. They simply wanted to feel a part of something.

Popular collective experiences are thin on the ground these days. We are all familiar with these observations — that we have 50 TV channels to choose from, lead mobile, atomised lives, work in fractured units, and have paid for the luxury of individualised freedom with the possibility of never again feeling as though we belong to anything.

What we understood less, perhaps, is how great the loss of those experiences has been felt, or how our desire for them has endured. In the manner of her death, Diana raised the possibility of recreating one of those experiences; our willingness to seize it illustrated not a modern, Americanised Britain, but a yearning for a quintessentially old-fashioned British moment.

The shock and sadness which greeted the news on August 31 was genuine. As the week wore on, the public responded to something else: not Diana's death, but a sense of an historic occasion. We should take care to recognise the difference. Standing outside the palace, what becomes clear is not how much we have changed, but how little.



The Washington Post



# Albright Steps Into Deepening Crisis

John Lancaster in Jerusalem

IN THE days before the scheduled arrival here of Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, leaders of Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians maneuvered for the high ground in talks with Washington, calling on Israel to fulfill its commitments under peace accords with the Palestinians.

Israel has suspended implementation of the accords in response to what it says are Palestinian failures to crack down on terrorism.

After their meeting in Cairo, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Jordan's King Hussein and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat issued a statement on Sunday calling on Israel to refrain from activities that undermine "the spirit of peace" and to carry out its pledges for further troop withdrawals from the West Bank.

But the message also was intended for Albright, whose first trip to the region as secretary of state coincides with a deepening crisis in Arab-Israeli relations. The crisis stems in part from last week's suicide bombing in Jerusalem and the killing of 11 Israeli commandos and an army doctor during a botched raid in Lebanon.

U.S. officials have made it clear that the main emphasis of Albright's visit will be to press Arafat to co-operate more vigorously with Israel in the fight against terrorism.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on CNN that Arafat "must be made to live up to his promise to fight the terrorists, to stop coddling them." If Albright brings "the weight of the United States to bear on the Palestinians," there will be progress in the peace talks, he told Fox network.

Palestinian officials, with backing from Egypt and Jordan, would like to see Albright call Netanyahu to account for hard-line policies that they say create an atmosphere that encourages terrorism.

On both sides expectations for a major breakthrough are low.

"Collaboration between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the war against terror has reached the verge of bankruptcy," military analyst Zeev Schiff wrote last week in Israel's Ha'aretz newspaper. "In either case, there is no chance that . . . Albright will be able to succeed now in her planned visit to the Middle East."

Some analysts suggest that if Albright can secure a commitment on Arafat's part to fight terrorism, perhaps she can use it as leverage to persuade Netanyahu to moderate his policies toward the Palestinians. They acknowledge, however, that the United States finds it politically difficult to exert serious pressure on Netanyahu as long as Israelis are regular targets of Palestinian suicide bombers.

"The main thing here is that Israel is right in demanding that Arafat fight terror in a much more significant way and Arafat is right to demand that Israel implement the the Oslo accords," said Yossi Beilin, a prominent Labor Party politician and an organizer of the secret talks that led to the 1993 accords.

Under the 1993 agreement, Israel is supposed to gradually withdraw its troops from much of the West Bank, reserving for "final status" talks the issues of Palestinian self-rule and the future of Jerusalem.

After last week's bombing, Netanyahu blamed Arafat, saying he has failed to control terrorists operating from areas under his control, and his cabinet announced a freeze on troop withdrawals.

The sense of crisis in Middle East diplomacy was compounded by the news of the botched commando raid in southern Lebanon.

The Israeli raiding party was ambushed by Lebanese army troops and Shi'ite Muslim guerrillas near Sidon in the worst defeat for Israeli forces in Lebanon in more than a decade.

This has rekindled a fierce national debate over the country's Lebanon policy, with even right-wing politician Ariel Sharon suggesting that Israel should consider withdrawing from the portion of southern Lebanon it occupies as a buffer against attacks on northern Israel.

During her tour of the region, Albright also is scheduled to meet in Damascus with Syrian President Hafez Assad, who is seen by U.S. and Israeli officials as holding the key to a Lebanon settlement because of Syria's support for Shi'ite Muslim guerrillas fighting to eject Israel from Lebanon.

But her trip will focus primarily on saving the troubled Israeli-Palestinian relationship. Co-operation between the two sides has essentially been frozen since March, when Netanyahu decided to go ahead with a massive Jewish housing project in East Jerusalem over fierce Palestinian objections.

The U.S. emphasis on security cooperation has come as a disappointment to Arafat, who is seeking American support for his view that Netanyahu has created an atmosphere conducive to extremist violence by continuing to expand Jewish settlements in the West Bank and by implementing harsh security measures that prevent the movement of Palestinians between cities under their control.

The Cairo meeting essentially endorsed Arafat's position and allowed the Arab leaders to present a united front in advance of Albright's visit.



A soldier consoles an Israeli woman horrified by the carnage of the second suicide bomb in Jerusalem in five weeks PHOTO NATI HARNIK

# AOL to Take Over Rival CompuServe

Rajiv Chandrasekaran

AMERICA Online Inc. reached a deal at the weekend to take over its biggest competitor, CompuServe Inc. online service that has 2.6 million customers, sources close to the negotiations said.

Under terms of the deal, CompuServe still would exist as a separate service, but would be fully operated by AOL, the sources said. AOL would have a combined customer base of more than 11 million subscribers.

Dulles, Virginia-based AOL intends to keep CompuServe's content focused on business and technology issues, the sources said. "AOL is going to use its scale and its resources to make it more focused and efficient in servicing the business and professional market," a source said.

AOL would acquire the service under a complex transaction also involving telecommunications giant WorldCom Inc. As tentatively structured, WorldCom would buy CompuServe as part of a $1.2 billion stock swap, then give AOL all the content and subscribers and $175 million in exchange for AOL's ANS network service. AOL executives have said that through combined operations, the CompuServe unit could become profitable.

Gary Arlen, an independent industry analyst, said the deal "strengthens AOL tremendously. It bumps up their subscriber base by 30 percent."

The deal would give AOL much-needed cash to develop new online content and expand its base of nine million subscribers. Whether the consumer-focused company can maintain the loyalty of CompuServe customers over the long term is unclear.

The online business, in which people can receive electronic mail, pictures, news reports and other material by linking their personal computers with other computers over telephone lines, was pioneered by CompuServe in the 1980s. By the 1990s, however, CompuServe was overtaken by AOL, which had more savvy marketing and a hipper image among young users.

H&R Block Inc., which owns 80 percent of CompuServe, has been trying for a year to sell the troubled and unprofitable service, which H&R Block executives have deemed a distraction to their core tax-preparation business.

CompuServe, of Columbus, Ohio, has virtually stopped trying to win new customers. Earlier this year, it ended a $19.95-a-month service aimed at novice users.

A plan to make CompuServe a separate stock company owned by H&R Block shareholders, which had been planned for late last year, was withdrawn after Internet stocks in general declined.

WorldCom's $1.2 billion offer amounts to about $13 a share for CompuServe, the stock of which closed last Friday at $13.50 a share.

The transaction would have to be approved by antitrust regulators. If approved, AOL's biggest competitor would be Microsoft Corp.'s Microsoft Network.

# Hun Sen's Forces Accused of Executions

R. Jeffrey Smith

SOLDIERS loyal to Cambodian leader Hun Sen have methodically targeted and executed at least 40 military officers or officials from the opposing royalist political party that he deposed in a July coup, according to a United Nations report.

The report blames some of the deaths on an elite, special forces unit that figured prominently in the coup and allegedly tortured more than 30 military personnel. It further identifies an apparent killing field for Hun Sen's victorious forces, an area roughly 60 miles southwest of the capital that multiple U.N. sources cited "as a location where many . . . loyalists [of the opposing party] were executed and their bodies secretly buried."

Some of the victims described in the U.N. report died after being shot in the temple, the mouth, or the chest while others were beheaded, strangled or their throats slit. Many of their bodies were hurriedly incinerated in pagodas, under military orders, while others were buried in shallow graves or dumped next to highways leading from the capital, according to the report.

"There appears to be a pattern of the deliberate targeting of certain senior [opposing party] officers and their key associates and subordinates," states the 24-page report, which was prepared by the Cambodia office of the United Nations Center for Human Rights in response to a public demand by Hun Sen for proof of alleged human rights abuses associated with his coup.

Ambassador Thomas Hammarberg, a special representative of the United Nations' secretary general, turned the report over last week to King Norodom Sihanouk in Siem Riep and discussed the report later with Hun Sen at his office in the capital of Phnom Penh, according to a U.N. official in Washington.

Hun Sen, who runs the country behind the figurehead of a new prime minister elected by his parliamentary supporters, has previously attacked the credibility of the U.N. office and demanded that its investigators be withdrawn from Cambodia. The Clinton administration has said it strongly supports the United Nations' continuing probe of human rights abuses and is exploring the feasibility of diverting some foreign aid to fund an expansion of the office's activities.

Since the coup, the administration has cut roughly $25.5 million in direct aid to the Cambodian government and said it will oppose any new international loans, but has continued aid to nongovernmental groups. Other key donor nations, such as Japan and France, have refused a U.S. request that they halt direct assistance to the government, however, and U.S. diplomats in Phnom Penh have continued to meet officials of Hun Sen's government.

"The administration remains disturbed and concerned by reports . . . of continued killings and intimidation," Assistant Secretary of State Stanley Roth testified before a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee.

Roth said he will press Japan again to curtail its aid, but acknowledged that the administration has not followed the private advice of a special U.S. envoy for Cambodia that President Clinton personally raise the issue with Tokyo. His comments led Sen. John F. Kerry, D-Massachusetts, to complain that Cambodia's problems remain on the "back burner" in Washington.

Most of the deaths described in the United Nations report occurred during the first week of fighting in the July 2-7 military operation orchestrated by Hun Sen against forces allied with Cambodia's first prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh. The prince fled the country and his political party, Funcinpec, has been destroyed.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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# Despotic and Corrupt Stooge of the West

**OBITUARY**
Mobutu Sese Seko

MOBUTU SESE SEKO, 66, whose despotic and corrupt regime ruled Congo — the country he called Zaire — for 32 years before he was toppled in May, died last Sunday in Rabat, Morocco, where he had lived in exile since his ouster.

He fled his capital, Kinshasa, on May 16, one day before a powerful rebel force led by Laurent Kabila marched into the city to claim victory after a seven-month civil war and supplant a reign of corruption that had made Mobutu a billionaire and reduced his country to poverty and chaos.

France, which he considered his second home, and several other countries in Africa and Europe refused to grant him political refuge before Morocco's King Hassan II agreed to give him asylum.

A former sergeant who rose to be army commander in chief and then president, Mobutu seized power in the former Belgian Congo by means of a coup. At the time, the country was reeling from five years of bloody strife that began when it gained independence in 1960.

Mobutu stayed in office through political guile, the constructive sharing of graft with colleagues and potential enemies, outright oppression, including torture and murder, and a marked ability for making himself appear to be indispensable.

During the Cold War, he was hailed in the West as a bulwark against communism.

Throughout his career, Mobutu received crucial aid from foreign allies with varying strategic, economic, political and commercial interests in central Africa. His chief patron for much of that time was the United States, which provided about $2 billion in foreign assistance. In return, Washington got a base for its operations in neighboring Angola.

France and Belgium were key Mobutu allies in Europe. Both sent paratroops to help him quell disturbances. So did Morocco. France received a base in Zaire for operations in its former African empire.



At stake was a country that covers half the area of the United States, shares borders with nine other African nations and holds vast potential wealth. Its mineral resources include 65 percent of the world's known reserves of cobalt and large deposits of copper, tin, uranium, gold, oil and diamonds.

The nation also was subject to enormous centrifugal forces. Its borders were drawn to settle rivalries between colonial powers without respect for ethnicity, language, culture, natural features or other factors that go into making a nation. With no tradition of statehood or economic reason to look to the central government, its regions tended toward autonomy.

Mobutu sought to hold the nation together by making it more "authentically" African and by presenting himself as its creator and savior. In 1971, he changed its name from Congo to Zaire. The following year he changed his own name. The former Joseph-Desire Mobutu became Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa za Banga, which, according to an official translation, means, "the all-powerful warrior who, because of his inflexible will to win, will go from conquest to conquest leaving fire in his wake."

Mobutu also made himself the object of a personality cult. In the controlled news media he was referred to as the Guide, the Father of the Nation, the Messiah. Television pictured him descending god-like from the clouds. His mother was compared to the Virgin Mary.

The defining characteristic of Mobutu's rule was corruption, and he was the chief beneficiary, gaining a fortune estimated at anywhere from $5 billion to $10 billion. The word "kleptocracy" was coined to describe his regime.

Mobutu first became an "asset" of the CIA in 1959. He made his first visit to the White House in 1963 as a guest of President John F. Kennedy. By the early 1990s, however, the rivalry between Washington and Moscow had been settled. U.S. diplomats began to suggest that Mobutu should step aside. But Washington also had to acknowledge that while it had done much to advance Mobutu's career, it could not bring it to an end when it wished. In the end, however, he began to lose his grip as a result of mismanagement and graft.

In 1994, he regained a measure of support when he allowed international aid organizations into the country to care for more than one million refugees who had fled tribal warfare in Rwanda.

Although many refugees returned home in 1996, an estimated 350,000 Hutus, uncertain of the fate awaiting them at home, remained in Zaire. There they exacerbated relations with Zairian Tutsis, who joined forces with Laurent Kabila when he began his rebellion last October.

In March, when Mobutu returned from France, it was virtually all over as Kabila's forces advanced unopposed on Kinshasa.

**J. Y. Smith**

Mobutu Sese Seko, ex-president of Zaire, born October 14, 1930; died September 7, 1997.

# Inspiration To the World

EDITORIAL

"MOTHER has been made by the media," said the priest Edward le Joly, who had worked with her for many years. "Without the media she would still be a little nun working with a few other nuns." It's easy to forget this about Mother Teresa: that she was at her work for a very long time before she was well-known, that it wasn't easy or pleasant and that for quite a while if people paid attention to her work at all it was to revile it.

Fifty years ago, she persuaded the authorities in Calcutta to provide a building where she and the nuns in her order could at least let the city's destitute die in some dignity and comfort. They picked up people off the streets and carried them in. There was stench and noise, an unremitting atmosphere of suffering and pain. The neighbors didn't like having it around. But she and her order staved off eviction, and their service continued.

The Mother Teresa whom Father le Joly spoke of was the figure who came to international attention when a BBC documentary about her work appeared in 1969, who was awarded a Nobel Prize 10 years later and whose religious order, at her death last week at the age of 86, operated more than 500 homes for the poor in more than 100 countries. She was an inspiration to millions, a byword for altruism, a masterful fund-raiser for those in need and a strong advocate for her religious principles.

But as the priest knew better than anyone, the real "Mother" was no creature of the media. She was, rather, a fascinating puzzle to them and to most of the world. Perhaps this was because she adhered so firmly to a very simple principle, stated in a 1974 interview: "I see God in every human being."

This is, of course, a common enough sentiment, easily expressed and rarely lived. In her life it meant a direct daily expression of love to those who were deformed, sick, diseased, mentally ill, "all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone," as she put it. It was this extraordinary ability at personal communion that defined her.



Mother Teresa . . . 'I see God in every human being'

# Forests of Borneo Going Up in Smoke

**Robert G. Kaiser**
**in Pontianak, Indonesia**

IN BORNEO this month there is no sky, and often no hint of the sun. The air, heavy with smoke, strains the eyes and limits visibility, often to a few hundred yards. Every leaf in the vast tropical rain forest is dotted with fine ash.

When the sun does appear, it shines through the smoky, gray-brown haze like a neon dinner plate. Eerily, waves of smoke blow across the bright disk, then make it disappear entirely.

This environmental apocalypse is caused by forest fires, some accidental but many deliberately set in Kalimantan, the Indonesian part of Borneo, and on Sumatra, 350 miles to the west. The cloud now spans hundreds of miles, and hovers over about 70 million people who live on Borneo, Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, all of whom are inhaling unhealthy levels of smoke particles from the fires.

Because of the smoke, there is only sporadic air travel in and out of Pontianak, the capital of the Indonesian province of West Kalimantan. Airports in Malaysia and Sumatra have had to interrupt service since early August; schools in many parts of the region have suspended outdoor athletic activities. Everywhere, eyes water and throats scratch. The acrid smell of wood smoke is ubiquitous. The vast smog is a palpable manifestation of grave and worsening environmental problems that plague most of Asia.

"It's a massive environmental tragedy, and it's basically man-made," said Charles Barber of the World Resources Institute, who works on projects to try to save the remaining tropical rain forests here.

According to Barber and others, many of the fires are deliberately set to clear land for new plantations to produce palm oil and pulp for paper, enterprises that are encouraged by government subsidies. Syarifudin Baharsyah, Indonesia's minister of agriculture, said recently that "plantations caused some 80 percent of the forest fires."

The governments of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, the countries most affected by the haze, have discussed possible remedial action, including trying to seed clouds and leasing aircraft to bomb the fires with water.

The Malaysian government has imposed emergency restrictions on driving, burning, and outdoor activities by schoolchildren. In the Malaysian part of Borneo, schoolchildren are wearing masks to school. But no action has been taken to put out the fires.

This is the dry season, but "dry" doesn't adequately describe this year's conditions. Much of Indonesia is suffering from water shortages. Here in Pontianak, trucks, bicycles, motorbikes and people are lined up around the clock at the main water-pumping station to collect water from the last municipal supply in this city of 450,000.

The dryness exacerbates accidental fires. And for centuries rice farmers have used the dry season to burn off the stubble of the previous season's crop and re-fertilize their land with the ash. Fire also is the basic tool for trash disposal in this part of the world.

So haze in the dry season is normal, but many local residents say it has never been as bad as this year. Travelers driving to the airport from Pontianak pass dozens of fires along the road and cross their fingers that their flights will actually take off.

Traditionally, the coming of the rains has both suppressed the fires and cleared the air. Now Indonesians fear that the rains, which usually come in September, will be late this year, perhaps months late.

The signs are strong that a terrible El Nino effect is already building, which for Indonesia can mean prolonged drought. The United Nations' World Meteorological Organization has reported signs of what may be the most damaging El Nino phenomenon ever recorded.

A bad El Nino over the next year would only aggravate this area's environmental problems. A recent study released by the Asian Development Bank in Manila summarized the situation in these terms:

"Asia is the world's most polluted and environmentally degraded region. . . . During the past 30 years, Asia has lost half its forest cover, and with it countless unique animal and plant species. A third of its agricultural land has been degraded. Fish stocks have fallen by 50 percent. No other region has so many heavily polluted cities, and its rivers and lakes are among the world's most polluted."

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
September 14 1997



# Caught Up in the Frenzy of Fame

OPINION
**George F. Will**

ONE CAUSE of Princess Diana's death was the modern form of fame, "the frenzy of renown." The frenzied, meaning people who are intoxicated by synthetic significance, are complicit in her death.

Death came when she and her companion were in high-speed flight from photographers hellbent on supplying the highly remunerative market for snapshots of her life. Hers was a life somehow always rich in opportunities for photographs of the sort she deplored. Greta Garbo she was not. She had a great fondness for cafe society, which is not the milieu of the reclusive.

She died in, and to some extent because of, the vortex of publicity that surrounds — no, that *is* — the modern British monarchy, into which she fell by marriage at age 20. Once upon a time, the justification for the monarchy was clear: It was God's will. No one now believes that, and few really believe the subsequent justification which, unlike the first, was more or less true for a while. It was that the monarchy is a constitutional necessity.

The monarchy is a residue of the infancy of the British people. They still like it, and it is their right to retain it, rationality being broadly optional. But there is no evading the fact that an occupational hazard of royalty is infantilism, now that royalty is shorn of serious duties and exists primarily to do public relations for itself.

One manifestation of infantilism is a sense of entitlement to incompatible things. Princess Diana felt entitled to be forever the social fiction that she became by marriage: royalty. In negotiations about her divorce she resented the forced surrender of, the title "Her Royal Highness."

However, she also wanted the sort of privacy often claimed by the privileged, meaning publicity on her terms. She wanted to be listened to concerning various social causes (the latest being a ban on anti-personnel land mines). But she had a claim on public attention only because she was a celebrity, as Daniel Boorstin has defined that term. That is, she was known for her well-knownness.

Thirty-six years ago, in his book The Image, Boorstin argued that the graphic revolution in journalism had severed fame from greatness, which generally required a gestation period in which great deeds were performed. This severance hastened the decay of fame into mere notoriety, which is very plastic and very perishable.

This severance was apparent by 1905, when the narrator of Edith Wharton's House Of Mirth spoke of living in "a world where conspicuousness passed for distinction, and the society column had become the roll of fame."

All democracies want royalty of their own making, and unmaking. Democracy's leveling impulse is served by democracy's powerful, if fickle, machinery of elevation through publicity.

Princess Diana died, in a sense, at the intersection of a premodern institution, royalty, and the modern sensibility, which holds that privacy is a denial of a democratic entitlement, the public's entitlement to any fact that entertains. She seems to have understood that her life was a constant conjuring trick. There was an incurable precariousness to her position as she tried to live off derivative dignity from an anachronistic institution while cultivating the royalism of a democratic age — celebrity.

In one of her last interviews she, who kept the company of the flamboyantly rich, struck a populist note: "I am much closer to people at the bottom than those at the top and the latter won't forgive me for that."

What proved to be fatally unforgiving was the insatiable craving of society, from top to bottom, for details of Diana's life as princess for a democratic age. It was a drama on which the curtain came down with a crash.

# Paparazzi's Victim is Victor in Media War

**Roxanne Roberts in London**

SHE died in battle, but Diana won the media war against the royal family. After 16 years of photo opportunities, tearful interviews and carefully timed leaks, Diana has been transformed from the face that launched a thousand tabloids to the innocent victim of rabid paparazzi. But the truth is more complicated: The most famous woman in the world had an intense love-hate relationship with the press.

No other celebrity courted and manipulated the media with as much savvy and charm. And no other celebrity protested louder when the cameras followed into her private life. But the chase that ended in her fatal accident began long before that Saturday night.

Only six hours before she died, Diana called her favorite royal correspondent, Richard Kay of the Daily Mail. She laughed, she pouted, she sighed. She confided that she was thinking of withdrawing completely into private life — except she still wanted to be an international humanitarian. Maybe she would marry her new love, Dodi Fayed. Then again, maybe not.

She knew that parts of that conversation would find their way into the newspaper. But any suggestion that Diana was in any way responsible for the constant crush of reporters and photographers around her is now a taboo subject. Fleet Street royal expert James Whitaker was forced to make a public apology last week for even mentioning the intricate dance between Diana and the press in an interview following the accident.

"I regret now if I said anything that caused offence to anybody listening to what I thought was a balanced appraisal of Diana and her complicated life with photographers," a grief-stricken Whitaker wrote in the Daily Mirror.

This, apparently, is not the time for balanced appraisals. Kay and Whitaker have been ordered by their editors not to comment on the relationship between the media and the late princess.

From the very beginning of her public life, Diana exhibited a talent for celebrity and an uncanny instinct for driving the media mad with desire.

"Shy Di" refused to talk to reporters but posed in a sheer skirt that displayed her long legs. On her first formal appearance after the engagement to Prince Charles was announced, the preppy 19-year-old upstaged everybody by wearing a spectacular strapless silk gown.

Diana was an overnight superstar. Not only had she married the heir to the throne, she was also beautiful, glamorous and, best of all, unpredictable. The cameras were always trained on her because no one wanted to miss her next great moment.

She made news every time she went out: kissing Charles — gasp! — in public, hugging an AIDS patient, running barefoot at her son's school race. It was inevitable that she would upstage the rest of the royal family. And she did, repeatedly. What nobody would say out loud is how much she enjoyed it.

But it was not until her marriage fell apart completely that Diana's natural talent for playing the fame game was revealed.

In 1992, Andrew Morton released Diana: A True Story. The book included revelations about Diana's bulimia and suicide attempts. The details were so precise and intimate that it was clear the book had been written with Diana's approval and enthusiastic help. Suddenly, it also became clear that all the quotes of "friends of the princess" were ones reporters had probably obtained from Diana herself.

Three years ago, Peter Stothard, editor of the Times of London, received a crash course in Diana's press strategy at a cozy private lunch. The two were virtual strangers, but within minutes Diana had revealed very private details about herself, Charles and his mistress. Stothard discussed subjects with the princess that he had never broached with his closest friends. Then she mentioned that she had "saved" a tramp that morning, and mused on how photographers could assist in her escalating battle with Charles.

"She made it clear that she alone, she felt, could manage her image, her job and her family," Stothard says. "She felt that her husband's friends were manipulating the press against her . . . and her only recourse was to fight like with like."

The mother of a future king did not intend to fade quietly out of royal life or lose her sons to the cloistered confines of Buckingham Palace. She believed that the only way to fight the power of the royal family was to become a beloved figure in the eyes of the public.

Diana possessed a keen understanding of the power of images. She posed alone and forlorn in front of the Taj Mahal, the monument Charles had once vowed to show her. She became a symbol of the woman scorned, the loving mother, the compassionate working woman.



Diana had an uncanny instinct for driving the mass media mad with desire PHOTOGRAPH: IAN WALDIE

Whenever public attention shifted to Charles, Diana upstaged him with a photo-op: On the night Charles gave an unprecedented television interview explaining his side of the failed marriage and his adultery, Diana showed up at a charity event wearing a short, sexy black dress. The gown, dubbed the "Up Yours" dress in the press, was pictured in every paper the next day.

Her decision to grant her own television interview in 1995 was perhaps her greatest public relations coup. It was a carefully orchestrated on-air therapy session of a recovering royal: Her life had been awful, but she would bravely soldier on — with paparazzi in tow, if need be.

Charles was toast.

Diana was so skillful at manipulating media coverage that she fell into a common trap of great celebrity: She thought she could turn it off when she chose. She was infuriated when the media crossed the line into her private life. The problem for most reporters was that she had revealed so much it was almost impossible to figure out what Diana really considered private.

Certainly the pictures taken by a hidden camera during a gym workout were unfair. The tapes of a provocative phone call with a male friend were cruel and embarrassing. But the princess was simply unrealistic about the price of fame when she went topless on a terrace in Spain and then was furious when a photographer took pictures.

In this respect, Diana was no different from entertainers who become famous and then bitterly complain about the great sacrifices of fame. Diana's death only reinforced their sense of outrage.

Only hours after the fatal accident, Tom Cruise called CNN to say he, too, had been chased down that Paris tunnel. Elizabeth Taylor gave a furious interview to TV's 60 Minutes comparing her own high-speed encounters with the media to Diana's: "She must have known such fear and it makes me so angry." None of the celebrities mentions that a speeding car is more dangerous than a camera.

It is possible for even the greatest celebrities to have a private life. After the glare of the White House, Jackie Onassis decided to live her life as quietly as possible. She rarely gave interviews, never posed for photos, made few public appearances.

The royal who has most successfully juggled her duties with a private life is Princess Anne, the queen's only daughter. "There have been no tantrums, no flirtatious changes of mind, just a stolid and, at times, ruthless determination to keep a part of her life for herself," says royal watcher Ross Benson.

Most celebrities are not that disciplined. Certainly, Diana was ambivalent about her place in the spotlight. One day she would tease and laugh with the media; the next she would glare and burst into tears. At the same time she was complaining about her lack of privacy, she posed for alluring pictures in Vanity Fair magazine and auctioned 80 of her ball gowns.

In the past two years, she used her fame to focus attention on good works: eradicating land mines, helping people with breast cancer or AIDS. A large part of her adored being in the white-hot center of world attention. Even as she vacationed with Dodi in the South of France in July, she couldn't resist teasing photographers with a new leopard swimsuit and news she was about to drop "a major bombshell." Two days later, as Camilla Parker Bowles celebrated her 50th birthday, Diana again posed for the paparazzi.

None of it matters now. Diana died suddenly when she was young, beautiful and tragic. In the court of public opinion, all is forgiven.

Diana has secured her place as the most beloved royal in modern British history. It is a hollow victory, but a victory nonetheless.



# *The* **GuardianWeekly** readers' survey

## Let us know your opinions

***All readers who return their questionnaire by October 1 will be eligible for our free draw. The first five names out of the hat will each win a Baygen Freeplay wind-up radio. The next five names will win copies of the Best Ever Notes and Queries***

Whether you buy the Guardian Weekly on an occasional basis, or have a subscription, your views and opinions about the paper are very important to us. To ensure that the Guardian Weekly better reflects your interests and needs we would be very grateful if you could help us by completing and returning the short questionnaire below.

As a token of appreciation for your help we will enter your reply into a prize draw in which you can win one of five Baygen Freeplay wind-up radios or a copy of The Best Ever Notes & Queries.

We have entrusted the survey to Objective Research, who will treat your reply in the strictest of confidence, as guaranteed by the Code of Conduct of the European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research. To enter the prize draw please ensure that your reply reaches us by the close date of October 1.

Thank you for taking time to help us with our research.

Yours,

Patrick Ensor

Patrick Ensor
Editor

## READERSHIP

**1. On average, how many issues out of four of the Guardian Weekly do you read or look at?**

4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1 or less ☐ (11)

**2. Is this copy:**

a subscription ☐ *please answer question 3*
bought ☐ *please answer question 4*
someone else's copy ☐ *please answer question 4* (12)

**3. a] For how long have you had a subscription to the Guardian Weekly?**

1 year or less ☐
between 1 and 3 years ☐
between 4 and 5 years ☐
over 5 years ☐ (13)

**b] Was the subscription:**

paid for by you/your household ☐
paid for by your employer ☐
a gift ☐ (14)

**c] On which day of the week do you normally receive a copy?**

**Before or on the Sunday issue date**
Thursday ☐ Friday ☐
Saturday ☐ Sunday ☐

**After the Sunday issue date**
Monday ☐ Wednesday ☐
Tuesday ☐ Thursday ☐
Friday or later ☐ (15)

**d] Which, if any, of the following problems have you had with your subscription copy in the past 12 months?**

copy arrived late ☐
copy arrived torn or in bad condition ☐
other problems ☐
*(please specify)* ______
no problems ☐ (16)
*Please skip to Q5*

**4. a] Did you obtain this copy of the Guardian Weekly:**

in your country of residence ☐
whilst travelling ☐ (17)

**b] How easy was it to obtain the copy?**

very easy ☐ fairly easy ☐
fairly difficult ☐ very difficult ☐ (18)

**c] Is there anywhere you would expect to be able to buy the Guardian Weekly, but have not been able to do so?**

Street ______
Town/City ______
Country ______ (19-21)

**d] For how long have you been a reader of the Guardian Weekly?**

1 year or less ☐
between 1 and 3 years ☐
between 4 and 5 years ☐
Over 5 years ☐ (22)

**5. How likely are you to take out a subscription or renew your existing subscription to the Guardian Weekly in the next 12 months?**

very likely ☐ fairly likely ☐ fairly unlikely ☐ very unlikely ☐ (25)

**6. Apart from yourself, who else reads your copies of the Guardian Weekly?**

spouse/partner ☐ other family members ☐ colleagues ☐ friends ☐
other people ☐ nobody else ☐ (26)

**7. What are your main reasons for buying the Guardian Weekly?**

British news ☐ (27)
European and international news ☐
coverage from Le Monde ☐
coverage from the Washington Post ☐
analysis and comment ☐
features ☐
to help practise my English ☐
sports news and results ☐
appointment ads ☐
because I (used to) read the Guardian in the UK ☐
other *(please specify)* ☐ ______

**8. a] Which of the following do you read in the Guardian Weekly?**
**b] Which of these are particularly important to you?** ***(please tick no more than three)***

| | READ | IMPORTANT |
|---|---|---|
| UK News | ☐ (29) | ☐ (34) |
| International News | ☐ | ☐ |
| UK politics | ☐ | ☐ |
| International politics | ☐ | ☐ |
| Articles from Le Monde | ☐ | ☐ |
| Articles from The Washington Post | ☐ | ☐ |
| Finance/Business News | ☐ | ☐ |
| UK Sport | ☐ | ☐ |
| International Sport | ☐ | ☐ |
| Arts | ☐ | ☐ |
| Books | ☐ (31) | ☐ (32) |
| Science/Technology | ☐ | ☐ |
| Chess/Bridge/Crosswords | ☐ | ☐ |
| Notes & Queries | ☐ | ☐ |
| Letter from ... | ☐ | ☐ |
| Comment/Opinion | ☐ | ☐ |
| General Features | ☐ | ☐ |
| Appointment ads | ☐ | ☐ |
| Other ads | ☐ | ☐ |

**9. Is there anything missing from the Guardian Weekly which you would like added or areas of current coverage which you would like expanded?** ***(please write in)***

______ (33-34)

**10.a] Overall, how would you rate the Guardian Weekly?**

Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ (37)

**b] What are your main reasons for giving this rating?** ***(please write in)***

______ (38-39)

**11. Which, if any of the following publications do you:**
**a] subscribe to**
**b] buy regularly (at least 3 out of 4 issues)**
**c] buy less often**

| | | SUBSCRIBE TO | BUY REGULARLY | BUY LESS OFTEN |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Published Daily:** | Financial Times | ☐ (40) | ☐ (42) | ☐ (44) |
| | Guardian International | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | International Herald Tribune | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **Published Weekly:** | The Economist | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | The European | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Newsweek | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | The Observer | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Time | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | The Spectator | ☐ (41) | ☐ (43) | ☐ (45) |
| | The Sunday Times | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Weekly Telegraph | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **Published Monthly** | National Geographic | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**12.a] When travelling in Europe, how often do you buy the International edition of The Guardian?**

all or most trips ☐ roughly every other trip ☐
less often ☐ never ☐ (55)

**b] How would you rate the Guardian International in comparison to the other English language newspapers you read?**

better ☐ about the same ☐
worse ☐ no opinion/never buy ☐ (56)

**13. Which, if any, of the following English language television channels do you watch at home?**

ABN ☐
BBC Prime ☐
BBC World ☐
CNN International ☐
EBN: European Business News ☐
Eurosport ☐
MTV ☐
NBC ☐
Sky/Sky News (UK) ☐
Sky Sport (UK) ☐
Star TV ☐
TNT/Cartoon Network ☐ (59)

**14. How often do you normally listen to the BBC World Service?**

daily/almost daily ☐ 2 or 3 times a week ☐
less often/only when travelling ☐ never ☐ (89)

**15.a] How often do you use the Internet (other than for e-mail)?**

daily/almost daily ☐ 2 or 3 times a week ☐
less often ☐ never ☐ *- skip to Q16* (60)

**b] Which of the following Internet sites have you visited?**

The Guardian Newspaper ☐ FT.com ☐ (61)
Guardian Recruitnet ☐ Electronic Telegraph ☐
Washington Post ☐ The Economist ☐
Le Monde ☐ CNNI ☐
The Times ☐ Others *(please specify)* ☐ ______
The Independent ☐ None of these ☐

**c] In an average week, how much time do you spend accessing on-line newspapers or news services?**

less than an hour ☐ 1-2 hours ☐
3-5 hours ☐ longer ☐
do not access ☐ (62)

**16.a] The Guardian Weekly offers a weekly e-mail service. Have you:**

used it ☐ *- please answer Q b*
heard of it but not used it ☐ *- please skip*
never heard of it ☐ *- to Q 17* (63)

**b] Overall how would you rate the e-mail service?**

excellent ☐ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ (57)

## ABOUT YOU

**17. Are you:** male ☐ female ☐ (64)

**18. How old are you?**

under 25 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐
45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+ ☐ (65)

**19. What is the highest educational level you have achieved to date?**

Secondary or high school ☐
University degree or equivalent professional qualification ☐
Doctorate/higher university degree/MBA ☐ (58)

**20. What is your working status?**

full time employed ☐ retired ☐ *- please answer Q 23*
part time employed ☐ student ☐ *- please answer Q 23*
self employed ☐ otherwise not working ☐ *- please answer Q 23* (66)

**21. Which type of organisation do you work for?**

**Commercial Organisation/Company**
manufacturing ☐
retail/trading/distribution ☐
banking/finance/insurance ☐
media/marketing services ☐
other services ☐

**Educational establishment**
university/higher education ☐
school ☐
**Government/public sector** ☐
**Charity/non-profit making organisation** ☐
**other *(please specify)*** ☐ (68)

**22. In which, if any, of the following are you involved during the course of your work?**

general management ☐
sales/marketing ☐
recruitment ☐
dealing with suppliers/buying goods and services ☐
none of these ☐ (69)

**23. Into which of the broad ranges shown below does your annual income before taxes fall?**

Under £15,000 (under US$ 24,000) ☐ £35,000 - £49,999 (US$ 56,000 - $79,999) ☐
£15,000 - £24,999 (US$ 24,000 - $39,999) ☐ £50,000 - £74,999 (US$ 80,000 - $119,999) ☐
£25,000 - £34,999 (US$ 40,000 - $55,999) ☐ £75,000 or more (US$ 120,000 or more) ☐ (70)

**24. Which, if any, of the following have you done in a business or private capacity in the last 12 months?**

had an article, paper or book published ☐
written a letter to an editor of a newspaper or magazine ☐
written to a public official ☐
been involved in an environmental/conservation group ☐
given a speech or addressed a public meeting ☐
been active in a professional group/committee ☐
been active in a cultural organisation ☐
taken on an active role in a social or civil issue ☐
none of these ☐ (71)

**25. In the last 12 months how many times have you travelled outside your country of residence?**

| | a] for holiday/personal reasons | b] for business/work reasons |
|---|---|---|
| None | ☐ (72) | ☐ (73) |
| 1 | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2 | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3 | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4-5 | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6-9 | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10-19 | ☐ | ☐ |
| 20+ times | ☐ | ☐ |

**26. Do you or other members of your household have any investments (eg shares, unit trusts, property, investment accounts)?**

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| in the UK | ☐ | ☐ (74) |
| in offshore centres | ☐ | ☐ (75) |
| elsewhere | ☐ | ☐ (76) |

**27.a] What is your country of residence?** ***(please write in)***

______ (77-78)

**b] Are you:**

a national of your country of residence ☐
national of another country ☐ *(please specify)*

______ (79-80)

**28. Which of the following best describes how you see yourself?** ***(please tick all that apply)***

a national of your country of residence ☐
an expatriate likely to return home in the next few years ☐
a long term expatriate ☐
a naturalised citizen of your present country of residence ☐
a citizen of the world ☐
of dual citizenship ☐
other *(please specify)* ☐

______ (81)

Please write in your name and address below if you would like to enter the prize draw:

Name: ______
Address: ______
______
Postcode: ______ Country: ______
Telephone number: ______

All details you provide will be treated confidentially as guaranteed by the code of conduct of the European Society for Social and Marketing Research.
Tick this box if you do not want to enter the prize draw ☐
Tick this box if you would not be willing to participate in further research carried out on behalf of the Guardian Media Group ☐

**Please return the questionnaire to Objective Research, Coast Road, Normans Bay, Pevensey, East Sussex BN24 6PU, United Kingdom**

# Education ethos fails practical test

Tackling inequality may do more for Britain's economy than simply focusing on education, writes **Larry Elliott**

IT HAS become an article of faith that education holds the key to economic success. Raise the level of educational attainment and you will make the economy more prosperous.

Behind this idea is the notion that in a globalised economy, free trade means that a country does not have to be endowed with natural resources in order to be rich.

It is only a nation's stock of human capital that really makes a difference. The way to increase the stock of human capital is to provide more and better education.

The fast-growing economies of East Asia are cited as proof of this. Pupils in Taiwan and Hong Kong do better at school — particularly in maths — than British children. Need we look any further for the reason why Britain is falling down the international league table? Well, yes, to be honest.

There is no doubt that ministers believe that the ideas on human capital popularised by Robert Reich, Bill Clinton's former labour secretary, hold the key to Britain's renaissance. Education is at the heart of the Government's programme, and there has been a steady stream of announcements over the past few months aimed at raising standards, setting tougher targets, sending hit squads into under-achieving schools, providing money for summer schools and starting to phase out the assisted places scheme to cut class sizes for five- to seven-year-olds.

In short, education is the one remaining area where Labour feels comfortable with full-throated interventionism. It is the epitome of the party's insistence that Keynesian notions of tax and spend have been replaced with a strategy based on invest and grow.

Like any policy, this one needs to be tested. Does more education make us better off? Or is better education the result rather than the cause of economic success?

In one sense, the argument is irrelevant. Spending more on education might be seen as a good long-term investment even in the absence of immediate short-term economic gains. Good schools with dedicated teachers impart values and virtues to pupils, reducing anti-social behaviour and, perhaps, increasing the incentives to achieve in later life. This, nowadays, sounds a naive notion of what education should be about, because it assumes that the point of mandatory schooling is well-rounded pupils able to think and question rather than an apprenticeship for a job. It could no doubt be argued that there is no contradiction between these two aims, but there is.

In America, schools have started to abolish classes in dance, music and drama in favour of buying more computers. Employers want pupils with IT skills; there is no demand for children who can hum a few bars from the Pastoral Symphony.

In fact the utilitarian approach to education could backfire, even in business terms. The trend is towards more service-sector employment, where interpersonal skills will count more than being able to process data. Education is linked to an individual's employment chances. The evidence is pretty strong that those children who have trouble with reading and writing are the ones most likely to end up unemployed or in a succession of insecure, low-paid jobs.

However, getting this message across to under-achievers may not be as easy as the Government thinks. David Hargreaves, professor of education at Cambridge, says one of the main characteristics of the East Asian model is that pupils are hell-bent on learning and are supported by ambitious parents. "This does not generally apply in contemporary Britain; and preaching to parents about their responsibilities changes little.

"A significant minority of students enjoy and make full use of their lives at school and university, and enter the professions and the higher levels of business, industry and public service. There is another group who put up with their education and do reasonably well. But there is a third group who by their early teens at the latest are thoroughly bored with their formal education, and over time become increasingly alienated."

Prof Hargreaves argues that the anticipation of unemployment and social exclusion foster a "disenchantment which drifts into deviance and unacceptable life-styles".

At this point the problems of education start to merge with the structure of the labour market and social factors such as poverty and inequality. In a paper published last week, Peter Robinson of the Centre for Economic Performance* argues that the data from studies which tracked the lives of those born in 1958 and 1970 showed that social class, parental interest and peer-group pressure were the main factors in determing levels of numeracy and literacy. "Children who had come from low-income households and from poor-quality housing were significantly more likely to be experiencing problems with basic skills as adults." The 1970 survey found that pre-school education, class sizes, teaching methods, homework policy and streaming had no impact.

THIS analysis runs counter to modern orthodoxy, which says that these factors are of crucial educational importance. His conclusion is that a "serious programme to alleviate child poverty might do far more for boosting attainment in literacy and numeracy than any modest interventions in schooling. One might have thought that tackling child poverty would be considered a good idea in its own right by a new Labour government."

A further problem is that the structure of the British labour market is biased towards low-paid jobs with low educational content. Robinson calculates that only 37 per cent of jobs demand literacy at Grade C GCSE and above, but 50 per cent of pupils attain this level. It will take 40 years before the share of employment in the managerial, professional and technical occupations expands to meet the available supply (even assuming that the GCSE pass level remains constant).

The upshot is that the better qualified pupils take jobs that would have gone to the less qualified, leading to frustration and boredom for the former and reinforcing the sense of the pointlessness of education to the latter.

Finally, there is the question of whether raising levels of attainment is good for growth. Robinson's study found there was no link. The comparisons between maths tests in Britain and East Asia taken by 14-year-olds in 1996 tell us very little about economic performance over the past decade because, even under the Conservatives, flexible labour markets did not mean putting five-year-olds back up chimneys.

More relevant comparisons emerge from tests undertaken in 1982-83, when pupils from Hong Kong and Thailand did not perform any better in maths than children in Britain. A World Bank study of illiteracy in Hong Kong and Singapore in 1985 found illiteracy rates of 14 per cent and 12 per cent respectively, rising to 20 per cent for women. In Britain, the figure is less than 1 per cent, and has been for many years.

The "tiger" economies did well in maths, but so did the Czech and Slovak Republics, and Bulgaria. The US results were as mediocre as those in Britain. Britain was in the bottom half of the table for maths, but right near the top for science.

A successful economy does require the three Es — not education, education, education, but the economy, equality and education.

*Literacy, Numeracy and Economic Performance is published by the Centre for Economic Performance, (+44) (0)171-955 7798, £12

## In Brief

THE stock markets of Malaysia and Indonesia enjoyed a rebound after Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia stepped back from the brink of a confrontation with the forces that drive international capital flows. However, fears of further turmoil in Asian markets left doubts as to how long these gains can be sustained.

THE Dow Jones Index in New York surged 257.36 points to 7879.78, a one-day record, as investors reacted to figures from the National Association of Purchasing Managers which revealed that manufacturing growth slowed last month, dampening US inflation fears.

A SPECIAL summit of European Union leaders will be held in Luxembourg on November 21 to discuss ways of finding jobs and co-ordinating training for the EU's 18 million unemployed, the European Commission announced.

NATWEST Bank admitted that substantial numbers of key executives have quit the American arm of its troubled NatWest Markets division. The company blamed uncertainty created by calamities including the $143 million loss on derivatives trading uncovered in March.

THE head of the German Bundesbank, Hans Tietmeyer, contradicted Chancellor Helmut Kohl's espousal of the single European currency by saying a delay in launching the euro would not be a disaster.

BANKS could collapse if they fail to eradicate the millennium bug from their computer systems, the Bank of International Settlements said. And the British computer group ICL warned companies they had only six months to complete plans to upgrade systems to cope with the introduction of the euro.

NORTHERN Rock members look set for free shares windfalls of nearly $3,200, when the UK building society floats on the stock market on October 1.

### FOREIGN EXCHANGES

| | Sterling rates September 8 | Sterling rates September 1 |
|---|---|---|
| Australia | 2.1632-2.1668 | 2.2053-2.2[illegible] |
| Austria | 20.15-20.17 | 20.55-20.5[illegible] |
| Belgium | 59.09-59.19 | 60.29-60.[illegible] |
| Canada | 2.1868-2.1888 | 2.2370-2.2[illegible] |
| Denmark | 10.90-10.91 | 11.12-11.1[illegible] |
| France | 9.63-9.64 | 9.83-9.8[illegible] |
| Germany | 2.8628-2.8662 | 2.9186-2.9[illegible] |
| Hong Kong | 12.25-12.29 | 12.49-12.[illegible] |
| Ireland | 1.0812-1.0831 | 1.0830-1.0[illegible] |
| Italy | 2,789-2,793 | 2,848-2,8[illegible] |
| Japan | 191.65-191.82 | 194.65-19[illegible] |
| Netherlands | 3.2255-3.2282 | 3.2885-3.2[illegible] |
| New Zealand | 2.4611-2.4647 | 2.5374-2.5[illegible] |
| Norway | 11.77-11.78 | 12.08-12.[illegible] |
| Portugal | 290.61-290.92 | 295.67-29[illegible] |
| Spain | 241.45-241.62 | 246.21-24[illegible] |
| Sweden | 12.28-12.30 | 12.59-12.[illegible] |
| Switzerland | 2.3518-2.3542 | 2.4047-2.4[illegible] |
| USA | 1.5822-1.5833 | 1.6126-1.6[illegible] |
| ECU | 1.4595-1.4611 | 1.4659-1.4[illegible] |

FTSE100 Share Index up 115. at 49[illegible]. FTSE [illegible] Index up 75.9 at 4610.2. Gold down [illegible]

# Air France brings privatisation crisis to a head

**Mark Milner**

FRANCE'S privatisation programme is a shambles. That is hardly surprising, given that the government is philosophically opposed to the concept. A decade ago, when a combination of a change of government — from right to left — and the collapse of the world market brought France's first wave of privatisations to a juddering halt, it did not matter too much. Now, external pressures mean it does.

Changes in telecommunications, defence and the airline industry mean that Lionel Jospin's government cannot simply reverse plans to privatise corporations such as France Télécom, Air France and Thomson CSF. It is less easy to see, however, what will be put in their place.

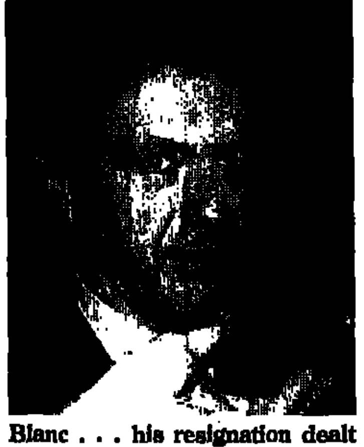
The issue was brought to a head by the resignation on Friday last week of Christian Blanc as chairman of Air France after talks with Mr Jospin the night before. The decision cannot have been a surprise. When the transport minister, Jean-Claude Gayssot, said last week that the government was looking at changing the status quo at Air France but would stop short of privatisation, Mr Blanc warned he would go unless that changed. Resignation threats from Mr Blanc are not to be taken lightly. In 1992, he quit as the head of RATP, the Paris regional transport authority.

Nor can Mr Blanc's move be dismissed as a fit of pique. It is a damaging blow to the government. When he took over in 1993, Air France was on course for bankruptcy. Last week he was able to forecast that this year it would make a billion francs.

Part of Mr Blanc's rescue programme involved pay-cuts, but he sweetened the pill by promising staff a third of the issued shares in the privatised company. And his privatisation plans were said to be supported by the trade union Force Ouvrière.

Mr Blanc has another concern. State ownership makes it harder for Air France to build alliances with the private sector. Yet alliances, are an increasing feature of the airline industry. For Mr Blanc, that added compelling commercial arguments to the moral obligation he felt towards his workers.

"Privatisation is necessary for the



**Blanc . . . his resignation dealt Jospin a damaging blow**

development of Air France. In the savagely competitive battle of world air transport, time is running out. There is not a minute to lose. It's precisely on the speed of development that there was a disagreement," he said.

Other state-owned enterprises could advance similar arguments. The government's opposition to the privatisation of plane-maker Aerospatiale and the defence electronics group, Thomson CSF, could hamper plans to restructure Europe's aerospace and defence industries, yet consolidation is needed if the challenge from America is to be met.

Not that the Jospin government rejects all privatisation. It will press ahead with the sale of the financial services group, GAN-CIC, and it might also want to look at Crédit Lyonnais, restructured at huge expense to the taxpayer. France Télécom is to be privatised — 20 per cent of its shares are to be sold off to the public — but it leaves the state firmly in the box-seat.

Mr Jospin tried to put a brave face on Mr Blanc's resignation. "The government wants Air France to have all the advantages necessary for its development to the first rank of the world's air companies," was the message from the Matignon, the prime minister's office. Mr Jospin plans to bring in changes which would allow worker participation and the development of international alliances.

That is unlikely to be enough. Clashes between commercial and political pressures look inevitable wherever companies are exposed to international competition. Those who suffer them will inevitably be at a disadvantage. That may be a matter for regret, but in a global market-place it is inevitable.







# Algeria's horrific settling of scores

Gilbert Grandguillaume, an anthropologist and Arab expert, discusses the Algeria situation with **Jean-Pierre Tuquoi**

**ARE the reasons for the mounting violence in Algeria to be found in the country's recent history?**

There is a historical link, but it has nothing to do with a "culturalist" approach that sees Algerians primarily as Muslims or "barbarians". What's taking place is a horrific and wholesale settling of scores.

Some of it goes back to the events of 1990-91. The villages where huge massacres took place recently are located in areas that voted for the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) at the 1990 local elections and the first round of the 1991 general election [the second round was cancelled by the government].

It's not impossible that the army is happy to see them punished. In villages that voted for the FIS, many mayors were later replaced by communal delegates who performed the same functions. Some of those in turn were murdered. That's another source of violence.

If one believes in the "settling of scores" explanation, account also has to be taken of the fact that the vote for the FIS constituted a massive rejection of the government.

**Can that explain why 300-400 people get massacred in a village?**

No, but sources of tension in Algerian society and hatred of the government are always present in the background. They can easily be revived and offered a new target by rumours and manipulation.

But I agree that the scale of violence is such that one probably has to delve further into the past. Scores are being settled today whose origins lie in conflicts resulting from Algerian independence in 1962, such as the massacre of 60,000-100,000 harkis that took place only months after independence.

The harkis were Algerians who joined armed French militias of the same type that the present Algerian government has set up in villages. After independence, the harkis were not allowed into France, and ended up prisoners in their own country. And they were killed.

Those harkis were members of families and tribes. There are persistent grudges that have been reactivated. Expressions such as "harki" or "son of a harki" are used as insults by either side. A harki is someone who has betrayed his country.

The harki problem was an extension of other problems connected with the Algerian war. There was the fight against the colonial power by the National Liberation Front (FLN), but there were other conflicts between members of the FLN and those of Messali Hadj's Algerian National Movement.

**There's talk of family feuds, too.**

Traditional hatred between villages, families and clans — the result of breaches of honour or disputes over land — lingers on. It resurfaces as violent brawls at football matches.

**That doesn't explain the present upsurge in violence.**

There may have been just as much violence in previous years without one being aware of it. News is managed by the armed Islamist groups and the government. And public opinion has been made vulnerable by the war: people tend to believe any rumour, however wild. There is a preventive form of violence triggered by false rumours.

Recently the state has encouraged the population to defend itself and has armed militia groups. In so doing it has recognised its own inability to protect the people and encouraged an avalanche of violence, only a fraction of which we ever hear about. I'm sure it has been caused by the setting up of armed militias. Either they carry out such operations or spur on the hatred of the opposite camp.

Delinquency also has to be taken into account. The climate of institutional violence in which the law has broken down is a breeding ground for delinquency among unemployed young people.

**The picture you paint is of a violent society.**

Algeria is a harsh society. Look at its schools. Children are often beaten and victimised from an early age. Ordinary people have to resort to bribery for their basic needs. Their feeling of disgruntlement found an outlet in the 1991 vote for the FIS. It was as much a protest vote as a vote for Islamism. Even that outlet was violently rejected by the regime.

In 1973, you could already sense the population's contempt for the government. The first riots came in the early eighties. Only a small spark was needed for large-scale violence to break out.

**Didn't that violence exist under colonial rule?**

Yes, it did. Native Algerians had no recognised rights, just relative ones. Many elections were rigged. Independence should have allowed the restoration of the rule of law. But an oppressive system was set up. When there is no law and a regime governs by force, violence is never far behind. And violence spawns violence, especially when there is no hope of the law and people's rights being restored.

**What's the most urgent thing to be done now?**

The law and people's rights must be restored. The regime will gain no credit by organising rigged elections. Confidence must be restored in the government. And the government must accept that its existence should reflect the will of the people.

The impression one still has is that the regime is not prepared to give up its total control of affairs. I'm not calling on it to stand down, but it must agree to allow some breathing space for the various schools of thought in Algerian society. I can't see that happening without some kind of external mediation.

The UN secretary-general Kofi Annan's appeal to Algeria's President Liamine Zeroual for an urgent solution is an important development.

Mediation must be discreet. Events have shown that no military victory is possible. And even if it were, it would probably be a bad thing anyway — it would have the effect of placing Algeria in an even tighter straitjacket.

(September 5)

**Violence spawns violence . . . victims of a recent massacre in which up to 300 villagers were murdered** PHOTO: SIPA/REX FEATURES

# New Caledonians itch for independence

**Jean-Louis Saux in Nouméa**

ON September 3, the third day of his trip to New Caledonia, the French overseas minister, Jean-Jack Queyranne, had little choice but to perform an act of pilgrimage by visiting the grave of Jean-Marie Tjibaou, the leader of the separatist movement, the Socialist Kanak National Liberation Front (FLNKS), who was murdered in 1989.

After meeting leading local politicians in the Pacific island's capital, Nouméa, Queyranne visited the Nord province, where the FLNKS has a majority, and the town of Poindimié, whose mayor, Paul Néaoutyine, is the FLNKS executive in charge of the key issue of mining.

It should not, however, be concluded that all will be plain sailing between the French government and the New Caledonian separatists.

The FLNKS president, Roch Wamytan, said on September 2 that "everyone was rather irritated" by Queyranne's visit. He could not understand why the minister had come to New Caledonia before September 15, the date when Philippe Essig, the government-appointed arbitrator, is due to hand in his report on a planned nickel-processing plant, whose existence most FLNKS members make a precondition for the resumption of talks.

"The Socialists are nationalists. We're an embarrassment to them. I think they're a bit ashamed of us," Wamytan told reporters. He also reminded them of François Mitterrand's 1981 pledge that New Caledonia would get independence. "One has just about had enough of republican principles after 144 years of colonial rule," said Wamytan, normally a very temperate man.

His firm stance can probably be put down to the fact that the next FLNKS party conference is coming up at the end of September. The new overseas minister is also, indirectly, a victim of the "laxity" for which he has criticised the previous French government, claiming that it was determined to give in to the separatists all along the line in the hope of reaching a satisfactory political solution before the French general election three months ago.

There are also more fundamental reasons for the FLNKS's impatience. The president of the Union Calédonienne (the main party in the movement), Bernard Lepeu, is not a man to mince his words: "Independence won't be handed to us on a plate, France is being so bloody stupid there may have to be more deaths. Deaths, deaths, deaths — it's always the same. France would do better to bring forward the date of our liberation. The government can't just act as an arbitrator — it must also play an active part in the decolonisation process."

(September 4)

# Dayton plan in danger of collapsing

EDITORIAL

THE Serb camp in Bosnia has probably never been as weak and divided. It is true that there were tensions among Serbs during the war. It is also true that their military positions were heavily shelled by Western troops at the end of the conflict.

But the Serbs still had a lethal weapon at their disposal — the threat of reprisals against unarmed UN peacekeepers. It has become clearer than ever that the arrival of Nato troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina resulted in a whole new ball game.

Almost two years after the signing of the Dayton peace accords, it is dawning on Western capitals that the whole edifice may collapse. The accords were flimsy from the start, since they enshrined the ethnic division of both the country and its institutions. But, with the consequent drying up of dialogue between the various communities, it looks as if war could engulf the region after Nato's pull-out in mid-1998.

This situation prompted the United States to set the cat among the pigeons. It was a carefully orchestrated operation that relied on the ill-feeling that exists, within the Bosnian Serb community, between the Pale-based hardliners led by Radovan Karadzic, and those loyal to President Biljana Plavsic in Banja Luka, who say they want to respect the Dayton accords.

The members of the Pale gang have become increasingly unpopular because they have acted in corrupt ways, feathered their own nests and turned down the offer of Western economic aid.

The West wants to undermine Pale's power. It has carried out the first successful arrests of local war criminals. But its military and diplomatic offensive has lost much of its impact because of doubts about its determination to nab Karadzic, chief perpetrator of crimes during the war.

What price is the West prepared to pay in order to get Karadzic? It is doubtful that he could be arrested without loss of life. His fall could result in the collapse of the Serb Republic. But then, would Bosnia-Herzegovina survive if an aggressive ethnic entity on its territory managed to stick it out?

Slobodan Milosevic, president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the true leader of the Serbs, is still the man the West is talking to. He could be implicated if Serb crimes are brought to trial. Is the prime mover of the war really the right man to decide the future of the country?

Weeks away from municipal elections that could be rigged and won by the ultra-nationalists, two months away from winter, which complicates military operations, less than a year away from Nato's pull-out, the time is ripe to arrest or isolate Karadzic. It is an opportunity that should not be missed.

(September 4)

# Bearing the weight of the kingdom

Florence de Changy
In Nuku'alofa, Tonga

THE 170 islands of the little Polynesian kingdom of Tonga lie in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, between Fiji and the Cook Islands. As well as being a dynamic coconut producer and a home to rare birds, Tonga is an unusual example of a hereditary constitutional monarchy where the king still enjoys virtually absolute authority over his 97,500 subjects, whose level of education is one of the highest in the region.

To carry out the business of government, His Majesty Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, aged 79, is assisted by his family and, above all, his eldest son, Crown Prince Tupouto'a, who is foreign and defence minister, a great Francophile with a keen interest in Napoleon, and a state-of-the-art communications freak.

The king's entourage also consists of the kingdom's 30 noblemen, from whose ranks the king chooses his ministers. He also decides how long their political careers should last.

That did not stop Tonga's first political party being formed three years ago by the Pro-Democracy Movement. A few months ago, its leader, Akilissi Pohiva, and a handful of Tongan journalists regarded as too "progressive" were briefly jailed in the small national prison.

Yet one afternoon in late August, Pohiva, dressed in a tie, jacket and *lava-lava* (the traditional Tongan skirt), attended a reception given in honour of the New Zealand prime minister, Jim Bolger, then visiting Tonga, without apparently causing any embarrassment to the king's entourage, who were quietly dancing attendance on the lawns of the New Zealand High Commission.

Nearby, Tonga's portly and affable deputy prime minister, Hu'akavameiliku, reassured the assembled hacks about the alleged gagging of the political opposition. He claimed optimistically that it would "all end with a good swig of *kava*" (a local tipple). He was in favour of reforms — but in due time.

In the background, standing majestically in the middle of the bay, was the oil tanker "presented by the French government of Tahiti", as the prime minister, Baron Vaea de Houma, put it.

Franco-Tongan friendship goes back a long way. In 1855, two decades before the Tongan monarchy was officially established, the islands signed a treaty with France, which became the first European country to recognise Tonga's sovereignty.


Taufa'ahau Tupou IV . . . encourages his people to eat less and take exercise PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS COP[illegible]

That is something the Crown Prince has not forgotten. When France resumed nuclear testing in the Pacific in September 1995, he defended President Jacques Chirac's decision. He said criticism of France was the "work of amateurs" — there was no point, he argued, in insulting someone if you subsequently wanted to ask him a favour.

The "favour" came in the shape of the oil tanker. After spending about $1.3 million on the vessel to make it insurable, Tonga hopes to use it to redistribute oil to various island states in the region. Although fiercely conservative on political issues, the Tongan government is quick to spot an opening for business.

For some years now, His Majesty has also given some thought to his subjects' weight. The Tongans have always been big, strong people, but with mounting consumption of fatty imported meat products they have tended to become monstrously large.

In August 1995 the king launched an annual weight-loss competition with the backing of Unicef, which gave out nine weighing machines to various institutions. He is now encouraging his subjects to adopt a healthier lifestyle by eating less and doing exercises.

The king himself, who 20 years ago weighed in as the "fattest king in the world" with a weight of [illegible] for a height of 1.88m, now works out in the gym three times a week and shows off his cycling prowess escorted by a posse of breathless bodyguards on foot. He has already lost more than 70kg — a right royal achievement.

(August 31-September 1)

# Turkmenistan has pipedreams of a golden age

Sophie Shihab in Ashkhabad

IS THIS a mirage, one wonders as one contemplates the road that leads out of the Turkmenian capital, Ashkhabad, straight into the desert: over a distance of several kilometres, one side of the road is lined with 34 luxury hotels set among gardens, fountains, bungalows and swimming pools. "And they're all practically empty!" chuckles a member of the colony of diplomats and businesspeople who rent rooms by the year in the handful of hotels that have gone over to Western management.

The rest, run by the ministries that had them built by Turkish companies, have now been waiting four years for Turkmenistan's dream to become reality. No one knows how much it costs the state to maintain and illuminate them.

But, like the half-dozen other international hotels that have been built or renovated in Ashkhabad, and indeed like its airport, "the most modern in Central Asia", and the new presidential palace, a kind of Taj Mahal built on a seven-hectare site gouged out of the city centre, they stand there as a silent and ghostlike testimony to the ambition of one man, President Saparmurat Niyazov, to turn his city into the Kuwait of Central Asia.

Turkmenistan certainly has what it takes: with a population of only 4.6 million and an area the size of Spain, it possesses gigantic deposits of gas, of which it was the world's second-largest exporter in the Soviet era. But it is only potentially wealthy: it depends on the goodwill of Russia, through which the two gas pipelines leaving Turkmenistan pass. And that goodwill is no longer there.

After reportedly paying Turkmenistan some $2 billion in 1990-91 for gas exported outside the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Russia subsequently held on to that hard-currency source for itself and diverted Turkmenistan gas to other bankrupt ex-Soviet republics such as Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia.

Today even that tap may be turned off. In April, Niyazov became so weary of waiting for bills to be settled that he himself halted all gas exports, which once accounted for more than 50 per cent of GDP.

"If he had distributed to the population only a fraction of what he's spent on his hotels and palaces, everyone would have already invested in a business," says Begench, a young worker on a huge new park site. He is paid 120,000 manat (about $21) a month, which does not go very far in Ashkhabad, where products, most of them imported, command almost Moscow-like prices.

When Niyazov got "re-elected" president in 1992 with 99.5 per cent of the vote, he decided, like some latterday Atatürk, to give himself the title of Turkmenbashi, or leader of the Turkmen. In January 1994 he organised a referendum that ensured he remained president until 2002. He explained that his people were not yet ready for democracy.

Niyazov, a former first secretary of the Turkmen Communist Party, later elevated the personality cult to levels unparalleled by his neighbours, securing in the process the indulgence of those who believed — or who had every interest in believing — in his neutralist, nationalist and mainly anti-Russian stance.

Yet he was the only one of the region's four Turkic-speaking presidents to have signed a joint defence treaty with Moscow, which arms Turkmenistan, keeps an eye on its borders with Iran and Afghanistan, and sometimes sends back its few political refugees. Those refugees have since preferred to emigrate to more distant places, notably Scandinavia.

But although there is no point in expecting to find opposition activists in Ashkhabad, the man in the street discusses his problems with an eagerness that must be alarming for a country so apparently under Niyazov's thumb.


Niyazov . . . has spent millions on hotels and palaces

"That orphan has turned our country into an orphan," said a woman about to be evicted from her house because of building works. She asked not to be named — it is not done to mention that Niyazov was brought up in an orphanage after losing his father, who died in action in 1943, and his mother, who was a victim of the 1948 earthquake that all but flattened Ashkhabad.

The neighbouring houses, now being demolished to make way for a new trunk road, were built shortly after the earthquake, partly thanks to a fresh influx of Russians and Ukrainians. The Turkmen, who used to belong to nomadic tribes, have no urban tradition — Russian settlers built Ashkhabad at the end of the 19th century.

The woman's two daughters and their seven children, who shared the house with her, will have to move into poky flats that do not have mains water or, in some cases, electricity. They are terrified of becoming yet further victims of the "Kuwaitisation" of Ashkhabad. The city centre has been stripped of almost all its residential housing. All that remains are its ministries, hotels and palaces.

"Two categories of Turkmen live together here without ever meeting," says Sasha, a young Russian who works as a street photographer. "Ordinary people vanish before sunset, then the streets are deserted. But from 10pm on they're full of young people driving BMWs and Mercedes. Some are capable of blowing $100,000 or more at the casino without complaining. Their parents have been authorised to export gas or cotton."

Sasha knows he has no future in Turkmenistan, where he was born. But he likes the place — and hates the Russian climate. "Perhaps those official promises about a better future will come true one day, when Iran or someone else builds a new gas pipeline."

But the president continues to promise a golden age, even though his country, which he has "protected" from International Monetary Fund reforms, is the only one in the CIS that still has high inflation and is threatened with worsening recession.

On May 13, shortly after doubling the price of bread, Niyazov opened the palace he had paid $100 million to have built by the French construction giant, Bouygues, which, after putting up a new mosque [illegible] from the capital, is now constructing a new Palace of Congresses [illegible] a similar sum and renovating [illegible] national television building.

Where does all the money come from? The question is the subject of much debate at the Florida, an English-style expats' pub in Ashkhabad. "Prestigious projects are paid for in cash out of the interest on Turkmen investments in Germany," say the French. "Paris is financing them with guaranteed loans," retort the English-speaking expats.

"It's all laundered money," claims someone long familiar with the region. That view is apparently shared by the Fund for Human Rights Violation Victims in Post-Soviet Central Asia, set up by Turkmen exile, Shchukahrat Ka[illegible]rov: "The Imperial Turkish Group, whose criminal leader Omer [illegible] Topal was murdered a year ago in Istanbul, controls the casinos and tourist industry in Turkmenistan. It is one of the mafia groups that has links with Turkmenbashi through diamond trafficking and the laundering of revenues from gas sales."

The young foreign ministry official who deals with journalists is concerned that the discontent felt by certain sections of the population — the existence of which he "admits" — may be misinterpreted. He begs indulgence for his "[illegible] young country", promises accreditation once he receives a copy of a "good article", and, as a parting gift, gives me three water melons weighing 5kg each.

(August 27)

Le Monde
Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

















## ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES

| UNIVERSITY | POST | REF. NO. |
|---|---|---|
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| Canterbury | L Geography | W46029 |
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| PNGUT (Papua New Guinea) | L/SL/AP, Development Sociologist | W46035 |
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# Bye bye boomers, hello Brussels

**Martin Walker** reflects on the generational shifts he has witnessed in the nine years he has served as the Guardian's Washington correspondent

MY *OLDEST* American friend, who picked me up in a flash sports car when I was hitchhiking back to Harvard from a rock concert in 1969 and flicked open a cigarette box to offer a choice of Panama Red or the fearsome Hawaiian stuff called Maui Wowie, has an interesting take on the most important change in American life over the past 30 years.

"The beer revolution. No question. We'd never have smoked all that dope if the beer had been any good," says Greg, who has been a lawyer, a real estate agent, an insurer for Porsches, a manager of female professional golfers, and is now living with a stunning Swedish opera star.

I have a photograph in support of his thesis, taken at President George Bush's summer White House in Kennebunkport. We had just come off his speedboat, after a spine-jarring jaunt to see the seals off the Maine coast, and Mr Bush tossed me a bottle of beer from the portable coolbox on the dock. It was Budweiser, that American desecration of a proud Czech name, and the kind of sour soft drink which had turned my friend Greg off the stuff until I took him to a London pub.

A couple of months later at Manchester, New Hampshire, the little-known Governor Bill Clinton and I were propping up the airport bar and waiting for the plane that would eventually get back to Little Rock. We were gassing about the next year's presidential campaign, but the significant memory is that we were drinking Sam Adams, the splendid hand-crafted beer from a small Boston brewery that launched America's real ale revolution. Baby-boomers balk at Budweiser.

In the nine years that I have been the Guardian's correspondent in America, the underlying story has been the great generational shift of the baby-boomers coming to power, despite the noisy and truculent resentments of that more traditional America still entrenched in the military, the police, the fundamentalist churches, the Bud-swilling fraternity houses and Country & Western bars.

The shift has not just been about the occupant of the White House, nor even about the beers and the now-ubiquitous Californian chardonnays and designer coffee bars. The way Americans live, the food they eat, the cars they drive and the work they do and the kind of sports they watch and TV shows they laugh at have all changed to echo the baby-boomer taste.

The traditional grip of the Safeway supermarkets with their plastic produce is giving way to mushrooming new chains of organic food stores. The old dominance of the Big Three TV networks has dwindled with cable and satellite to the point where some nights they get just over half the national audience.

To arrive in America when Ronald Reagan was president and leave it with Bill Clinton embarked on a second term is to have made a journey from one kind of America to another, and one that so far has confounded all the worst fears of the departing old guard.

"It's a terrible generation," one of my favourite military men, General Bill Odom, who used to run the National Security Agency, once told me. "Even the good ones who came out to serve under me in Vietnam. They couldn't take orders and they could give them. The entire generation is shit."

Not so. The most remarkable feature of the baby-boom generation is how stunningly well they appear to be doing. Reagan's old guard may claim to have made the final heave in the arms race that broke the Soviet economy and won the cold war. But it has been Clinton's team that can claim to be winning the peace, passing the Chemical Weapons Convention, intervening to end the Bosnian war, to enlarge Nato, and to send the aircraft carriers to the Taiwan Strait and give warning to China that the old cold war containment strategy could be turned against them too.

There is no parallel in modern history for the global military hegemony which the United States now enjoys on land, sea and in aerospace. Its defence budget is the same as the next 10 significant military powers added together, its weaponry is a technical generation ahead. And it all costs just $250 billion a year, a mere 3.6 per cent of GDP. The last time the US spent so tiny a portion of the national wealth on defence was 1940, the year before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor bounced them into global dominance.

This is the modern Rome, its garrisons still standing watch on the Rhine as the legions did 2,000 years ago. But its troops and bases also uphold the Pax Americana in Japan and Korea and the Persian Gulf. Its (and happily our) language is the modern Latin, just as the communications satellites and phone links and Internet are our equivalent of Roman roads. The Americans even have that Roman obsession with the export of decent plumbing and central heating.

But if the old guard still claim to have won hot and cold wars alike, they plunged the US economy into dire straits to do it. The best soundbite of the 1992 election campaign came from the late Senator Paul Tsongas: "The cold war is over, and Japan won."

He was talking about the massive federal budget deficits of the Reagan-Bush years, which took the government's debt from barely $1,000 billion when Reagan entered the White House to more than $4,000 billion when Bush left it. But the real economic failure had begun much earlier, just as the baby-boomers began leaving their colleges and their anti-war demos for the real world.

Between 1947 and 1972, median family income in the US doubled, from $18,000 to $36,000 a year in today's dollars. From 1972 to 1994 it barely rose at all. To a large extent this can be attributed to the increase in the number of households and the poverty of single-parent households. But the fact that the number of women in the workplace has more than tripled in the past 30 years meant that for most American families, two wages were needed to sustain living standards that one used to pay for.

Through the great inflation of the 1970s and the ravening deficits of the 1980s and downsizing of the old labour-intensive corporations in the early 1990s, this stalling of the great American prosperity machine dominated the politics and the mood of the nation. It fuelled the fashionable (and wrong-headed) theories of American decline and of imperial overstretch, and accelerated the economic and jobs crisis of the inner cities, which in turn steepened crime rates and racial tensions.

**To arrive in America when Ronald Reagan was president and leave it with Bill Clinton embarked on a second term is to have made a journey from one kind of America to another**

Then came what must with fairness be called the Clinton boom. Median family income is up to nearly $40,000. Unemployment is below 5 per cent, GDP growth is over 4 per cent and inflation below 3 per cent. Above all, this comes from a transformed American economy. When Clinton first went abroad in 1968, trade accounted for about 10 per cent of American GDP. It now accounts for more than 30 per cent, and the Clinton boom leans heavily on the way the US is now the world's biggest exporter and has become unprecedentedly dependent on the global economy which it dominates.

This is a matter of quality as much as quantity. Of the three great exporting nations, the classic image of number three is the Mercedes Benz car, a splendid piece of basically 1930s technology. The classic image of number two is the Sony Walkman and the VCR, cleverly marketed products of 1970s technology. The classic image of number one is the Windows 95 operating system, or a Boeing 747, or Hollywood's latest megahit. Which economy would you rather be part of?

The result of the cold war has been a victory more strategically sweeping than any since Trafalgar, which established the global dominance of the Royal Navy and the triumph of Britain's revolutionary new industrial and commercial system.

The Americans have slithered with remarkable speed from the cold war strategy of leading a global military structure to organising the new free trading and capital-mobile global economy, of which they are linchpin and guarantor. Clinton can orate a bit fulsomely about the triumph of free markets and free institutions, and democracy may not quite be the word for the emergent structures of Russia, China and Mexico, but he has a cogent point.

And America's renewed domestic prosperity has brought with it some happy social effects; plunging rates of murder and violent crime; a job-creating economy that is easing the transition to the "reform" of welfare; and a baby-boomer sensibility which is civilising at least the discourse for women and gays. Above all, it may finally be helping reconcile America to its extraordinary achievement with its historic anguish over race.

We are accustomed to focusing grimly on that 40 per cent of young black males who are in prison, on bail or on probation, caught up in a violent and vindictive culture that now has almost 1.5 million Americans behind bars.

But there is a bright side to the picture which would gladden the heart of Martin Luther King, who did so much to bring it about. The 1990 census found that of 30 million black Americans, more than 9 million lived in households with an annual income of $35,000 or more, the usual definition of middle class.

Among black Americans 30 years ago, there were five times as many high school dropouts as college graduates. Now, among blacks aged 25-44, the numbers are even. In 1970, only 15.3 per cent of blacks had any college education; today, the figure is 48.3 per cent (compared with 50.8 per cent among whites).

In suburb after suburb, from Carson in California to Southfield in Michigan to Queens in New York, black median household income is higher than that of whites, as the new black middle class abandons the inner city for the safer streets and better schools, just as the whites did.

Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans are doing even better, following in the classic footsteps of the Irish, Italian and Jewish immigrants who found and forged such opportunity in America, and made so many compromises with its brutal rules. For every time I remember the Kim family, whose shop and shotguns saved me from a rampaging mob in the Los Angeles riots, I recall also the gentle Jewish grandfather, an Auschwitz survivor, whom I met at a National Rifle Association convention in St Louis.

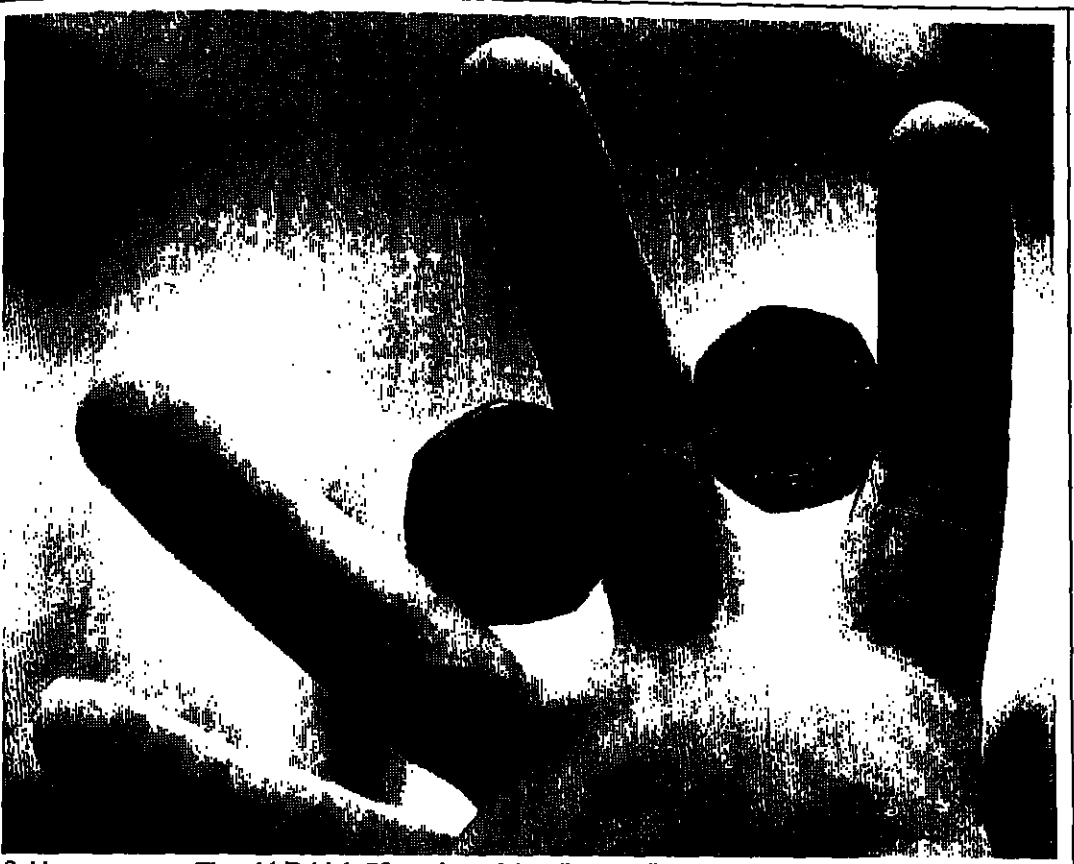
"If we'd had the right to bear arms, the Gestapo would have had a helluva recruitment problem," he said, his fingers playing over a Smith and Wesson .38 as if it were a violin, in one of those remarks which bring you up short to rethink old assumptions.

I still think America's gun laws are insane, its health system overpriced and socially unjust, and its political finance system breathtakingly corrupt. I still fear that even if this economic boom continues to defy gravity, America is busily re-creating an eerily Victorian social system of a sleek middle class squatting above an underclass and an ominously large number of respectable poor.

But I leave stunned by the robust ability of this most frenetic of cultures to re-invent itself, awed by its generosity, aghast at its schizoid swings from cultural despair to crude overconfidence, and so far impressed by how well the baby-boomers are managing their inheritance. I shall toast my farewell with a last glass of Sam Adams Boston Lager, and reflect on all the Japanese-owned resort hotels and golf courses which now occupy the Hawaiian fields where the Maui-Wowie used to grow.

Martin Walker starts as the Guardian's European Editor later this month





Quid pro quo . . . The old British 50p coin and its slimmer, lighter but still seven-sided replacement introduced by the Royal Mint last week. The coin will be phased in over the next year by which time the old version, which has been in circulation since decimalisation in 1969, will cease to be legal tender. In November, a £2 coin will also be introduced to Britain PHOTOGRAPH SEAN DEMPSEY

## Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

**YOU recently reported that "we share 98 per cent of our genetic make-up" with bonobons (pygmy chimpanzees). What proportion (on average) of my genetic make-up do I share with any member of the human race?**

ANY differences in genetic make-up of human beings amount to less than 0.2 per cent. So we each share more than 99.8 per cent with all other humans. Which makes all the deaths from "ethnic cleansing" and other racist ideology so much sadder. — *Jimmie Storey, New South Wales, Australia*

**AFTER the establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire, how long did it take for pagan worship to die out?**

PAGAN worship hasn't died out — ask any Italian soccer fan. — *Martyn Wells, South Fremantle, West Australia*

**WHY is the "hash key" on a telephone so called?**

BECAUSE the telephone companies realise that one day drugs will be legalised and plan to start a delivery service. — *Steve Mallon, Eccles, Manchester*

THE hash mark on a telephone is so called because if you accidentally hit it while dialling it makes a complete hash of the number. — *Paul Cheesman, Bangkok, Thailand*

THE hash key is not universally so called. In Canada, for example, it is known as the octothorpe. Some British companies have tried to standardise on "the square key", but for those of us who produce instructions for telephone users, "hash" is concise and unambiguous.

The symbol is also used to indicate numbers, especially in the United States, and as a proof-reading mark to indicate a space. Chambers dictionary traces its name to "hatch" and "hachure" — marking or shading with fine (often diagonal) lines, incisions or inlaid strips. — *Jane Teather, JET Documentation Services, London*

**APART from Italy and India, which countries cater best for vegetarian tourists?**

DUE to to the presence of chains such as McDonald's and Pizza Hut throughout the world, vegetarians can at least get chips and pizzas. We have found good vegetarian food without any problem in Kenya, Madagascar and Thailand. — *Harish and Chandni Shah, London*

IN RECENT years, I have found that Britain has developed better opportunities for vegetarians to enjoy their holidays as "normal" people than almost anywhere else.

The place I have found it most difficult to obtain vegetarian food (other than omelettes) is France. — *Andy Woolley, Cowpe, Lancashire*

IN THE many food courts of Singapore, there is a huge variety of wonderful vegetarian food. Unfortunately, if you pronounce the phrase wrongly, you may end up with pigs-organ soup or chicken-feet stew. — *Andy Wallace, Singapore*

**WHAT is the derivation of the expression "nitty-gritty"?**

NITTY-GRITTY, according to some wordsmiths, comes from an association of nits, the eggs or larvae of hair lice, and grits, abrasive granules. Of course, the term's reduplication (the repetition or partial repetition of a radical element) may have played a part. The term dates from the 1960s in America. — *John Abbott, Depoe Bay, Oregon, USA*

I WAS once told off for using the expression on the grounds that it was racist. When I asked for clarification, my politically correct friend thought it had something to do with blacks in the American South being characterised as having nits and eating grits. — *Alison Kelly, Luxembourg*

NITTY was an 18th century dealer in abrasives. His shop was in London, and he was noted for being a stickler for detail. One could tackle the tough problems with some of his gritty material. — *William Moeser, Springfield, Vermont, USA*

**WHAT are the chances of the Year 2000 computer-date problem causing world-wide economic meltdown?**

ONE in a millennium. — *Mungo Carstairs, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe*

### Any answers?

**WHERE does the term "toffee-nosed" come from?** — *Steuart Eaton, Pulheim-Geyen, Germany*

**WHY are Anglo-Saxons, unlike the people of other nations, exceedingly tight-lipped about the size of their earnings?** — *Dino Bressan, Melbourne, Australia*

**WHAT is the adaptive function of blushing? What is the mechanism, and why does it affect women more than men?** — *Diana Simpkins, London*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/+44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. The Notes & Queries website is at http://nq.guardian.co.uk/

## Letter from Karachi Mary Dunlop

# A night at the races

WE HAD been curious about the donkeys for weeks. Every Thursday night, enormous numbers of them, pulling carts overloaded with passengers, headed towards Karachi's seaside area. The occupants of the carts — often as many as a dozen — whooped, yelled and waved what looked, and sounded, like football rattles.

Intrigued, one night we followed them. Near the shrine of Qazi Abdullah Shah in Clifton — a seaside suburb whose fresh breezes the British believed cured the "vapours" — we discovered hundreds of donkey carts surrounded by milling crowds of chattering, laughing Baluchi men and boys. Spotting foreigners, they soon pulled us into their midst, enthusiastically telling us that Thursday night was racing night. Donkey racing.

By day, the men transport goods all over the city on their donkey carts. All licensed donkey carts in the city sport number plates. The work is tremendously, back-breakingly hard, and a long, long day provides a meagre salary.

Firasat, who like many Karachiites speaks several of Pakistan's languages fluently, acted as translator as the men, all trying to shout at once, explained how the race was run. Contrary to what we had first thought, not everyone takes part. The real race is between just two donkeys. The other few hundred are spectators — or at least provide the transport for the human spectators.

We were led forward through the excited crowd to view the stars of the show, two small donkeys harnessed to little, one-man carts. Racing donkeys are much more slightly built than their heavier, working cousins and are specially bred. They never have to pull loads, and live a life of positive luxury, pampered, petted and fed on the very best their owners can provide. "This one", Firasat said of one of the two, whose proud owner was yelling at us over the crowd, "costs more to feed than my family. These donkeys are better fed than their owners' children."

The race does not get under way until after midnight, when Karachi's streets are a little less congested. But the men gather earlier in the evening to socialise. There was a wonderful sense of camaraderie among them as they talked form and exchanged news and ribald remarks. Firasat blushingly refused to translate any of the latter. But he did tell us that heavy bets are placed on the outcome of a race. A great deal of money can be lost or won on a Thursday night, allowing the victorious owner to recoup some of his investment.

Finally, the two little donkeys sped off. The football rattles went into action and raucous whoops and cheers filled the air as the supporters battled to stay close to the main protagonists. The drivers of the larger carts resembled demented Ben Hurs as they urged their donkeys into a gallop.

The race ends several kilometres away on the Napier Bridge. By the time we arrived — too late to witness the winner's triumph — some of the donkey men were already heading home. As a group of carts charged past us, I said wistfully, "It looks like fun." The words were barely out of my mouth when a donkey cart was pulled to a halt and an invitation issued. I could hardly refuse, could I?

The grinning driver started at a gentle trot, giving myself and my equally foolhardy companion time to adjust — and making sure the other drivers would notice his foreign cargo. Then without warning, we were at full gallop, the other donkey men spurred on to even greater heights of exuberance as they raced to overtake us.

Thundering through the streets of downtown Karachi, we clung to the sides of the cart with the superhuman strength born out of fear. As we shot past our turning for home we tried to request a stop, but it was clear by then we had been forgotten — the driver concentrating solely on winning the impromptu race our presence had encouraged. The thought of leaping out briefly crossed my mind and was dismissed. Foolhardy, maybe, suicidal, no.

Finally, we juddered to a stop, a long way from home. Not knowing or caring who had won, we clambered gratefully onto terra firma, thanking the still-grinning driver for an unforgettable experience. As we headed wearily homewards, our battered bodies feeling as though they had been subjected to a vicious assault, the echo of the donkey men's laughter still sounded in our ears.

# A Country Diary

**Brenda Owen**

YUNGABURRA, Queensland: This area is renowned for its waterfalls, extinct volcanoes and fantastic fig trees. *Ficus virens* is innocent in its infancy but murderous in its maturity — a strangler in fact. Starting life in bird droppings at the crown of a forest tree it sends its roots down around the trunk of the host which ultimately becomes enveloped and dies. The resulting fig trees can assume impressive shapes and proportions.

Having visited these, many waterfalls and two crater lakes (at the same time giving lunch to a couple of leeches) we decided to inspect Mount Hypipamee. As well as having a strange name it is an unusual volcanic crater in that it is tubular, perhaps 50 metres in diameter, its rocky sides descending vertically into a murky green pool about 100 metres below.

Picnicking afterwards, we were soon joined by two brush turkeys, who have learned that when two or three people are gathered together for lunch there are sometimes leftovers for them. With naked red heads and necks, a prominent egg-yellow wattle like a collar below and glossy black feathers, they are eye-catching birds.

Two types of honeyeater were our next visitors and although they found nothing of interest at our table, one of them soon spotted our neighbour peeling a mandarin orange. Without ceremony it flew over, perched on his hand and plunged its beak repeatedly into the juicy fruit.



# Golden age of the Met

**OBITUARY**
Sir Rudolf Bing

**SIR RUDOLF BING, who has died aged 95, once said that the whole of his career until 1949 was a preparation for the New York Metropolitan Opera.**

**Bing was born in a Vienna that was still the capital of the Austro-Hungarian empire at the start of the century. After a job with a concert agency, he had by the late 1920s become Carl Ebert's administrative assistant in Darmstadt and Berlin.**

**In 1935, he joined Ebert — and Fritz Busch — as general manager at Glyndebourne Festival Opera in Sussex, a post he held until 1949. During that time he conceived the then daring plan for an annual international festival to be held in Britain after the war. He managed to sell the idea to Edinburgh and from 1947-49 he was the festival's artistic director, reuniting Bruno Walter with the Vienna Philharmonic, and revealing to the world the genius of the contralto Kathleen Ferrier.**

**At the New York Met, Bing assumed star status almost immediately. As he often said: "Everything that goes on at the Met, down to the casting of the Third Orphan in Der Rosenkavalier, is my responsibility."**

**Because of his immense authority, he was able to defy the Met board and achieve a breakthrough of lasting significance: at a time when the United States was still largely segregated, he engaged Marian Anderson, the first black singer to appear at the Met, in January 1955.**

**He also overcame opposition to reintroduce the Norwegian soprano Kirsten Flagstad, falsely accused of singing for the Nazis, despite a savage press campaign.**

**When he arrived in New York, musical standards were high, production standards abysmal. Though the Met had most of the world's great singers under contract, all they were required to do was line up across the stage and vocalise while the tattered sets shook as though in empathy. One critic of the time said that the scenery of Gioconda looked older than the Venice it was supposed to represent.**

**Bing changed the Met's entire orientation. Even so, he had more administrative skill than creative imagination. He was incapable of taking the company beyond the kind of achievement with which he himself had grown up artistically.**

**The company's most notable asset remained its casting. In 1964-65, the roster of sopranos included Albanes, Callas, Crespin, Della Casa, Milanov, Moffe, Nilsson, Leontyne Price, Rothenberger, Rysanek, Schwarzkopf, Sutherland and Tebaldi. No wonder that, in retrospect, the Bing era looks like a golden age. He retired in 1972, six years after leading the company into the new Lincoln Centre.**

**Dale Harris**

Rudolf Franz Joseph Bing, impresario, born January 9, 1902; died September 2, 1997


Royal flush: Judi Dench glows as Queen Victoria in Mrs Brown

# A royal Highland fling

CINEMA
**Richard Williams**

*AND SO* to Balmoral, where the court has marooned itself, wholly focused on a monarch in mourning, isolated from a sceptical public and a squabbling Parliament. A breath of royal scandal taints the Highland air. In the capital, murmurs of republicanism are heard; courtiers divide and intrigue; satirists enjoy a boom. A fractious Prince of Wales wonders when, if ever, he will inherit his mother's throne.

Men from the London newspapers peer between the crags, training brass telescopes — the telephoto lenses of the 19th century — on the family group, hoping to spot a telltale intimacy between the Queen and her controversial friend. Private diaries are mysteriously removed.

What a time in which to see Mrs Brown, the story of the unorthodox liaison between Queen Victoria and John Brown, the servant who became her confidant. Brown's rude spirit, running against the smooth, fine grain of the court, revived her morale after the death of her consort, but then fell victim to the overpowering machinery of state.

The resonances are rich, complex, and instructive. No doubt, as they put the film together, its writer, Jeremy Brock, and director, John Madden, were aware of the potential for emphasising certain ironic parallels with the contemporary state of the House of Windsor.

As a well-made examination of a fine and surprising story, Mrs Brown would have received a warm welcome in any case. In the present, extraordinary circumstances, it will receive another level of attention entirely. And it will not shrivel in the light.

The film opens in 1864, with the 45-year-old Queen (Judi Dench) deep into the third year of her solitary lament for the loss of Prince Albert. Amid the Italianate architecture of Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, built by Cubitt to Albert's commission, she plods gloomily through the days, presiding over a regime of "ferocious introspection" (as her anxious private secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby, puts it) in which no voice may be raised to disturb her misery.

Outside the walls, the nation is wondering where its monarch has gone. Grasping for some sort of remedy, Ponsonby (the admirable Geoffrey Palmer) calls John Brown down from Balmoral, where he had been Albert's trusted ghillie. Scorning the overbred manners of the court, Brown (Billy Connolly) persists in poking at her numbness until he has detected the living tissue. Under his scolding and cajoling she rediscovers a life of riding, walking, painting, smiling, and dropping in on humble crofters, all performed without ceremony.

In Scotland the recovery accelerates and the courtiers, too far from their power base, get jittery. "Oh God, the pipes," Ponsonby moans, thinking of how her less respectful subjects are beginning to speculate on the true nature of the liaison. As the last skirl of an Eightsome Reel dies away, the Queen and her servant share a look of pure happiness. "Pandora's box," whispers Disraeli (Antony Sher), who has come to sort out the kilted Rasputin.

The film's subtlety is in its suggestion that there may have been some basis to the Establishment's fears. "I'm Her Majesty's Highland Servant, indoors and out," Brown roars to his brother, a kitchen servant. "There's no stopping me now!" But there was, and in the finest passage of a brilliantly written film Disraeli persuades both Victoria and Brown that the national interest is best served by her return to public life and to the south, a decision upon which their relationship pivots.

Dench is marvellously contained, and Connolly is properly robust, but Sher's beady-eyed, silken-tongued prime minister compels attention from eye and mind whenever he appears, carrying this apparently modest film beyond anecdote and setting it afloat on the tides of history.

*GILLES MIMOUNI'S* L'Appartement opens with a young man, Max, trying to select a wedding ring. The jeweller recommends three, but Max can't make up his mind. His indecision turns out to be symbolic. Leaving his fiancée to chase a former lover, he finds himself entangled instead with a mysterious third woman. And so the game begins in a comedy-thriller whose subject is the way the most profound aspects of our lives are shaped by chance and timing.

Vincent Cassel, the electrifying skinhead from La Haine, is Max, prevented by a series of mishaps from a rapprochement with Lisa (Monica Belluci), whom he lost years earlier thanks to the jealous trickery of her dowdy friend Alice (Romane Bohringer). When the newly glamorised Alice diverts him into her own bed, she is taking time off from her own relationship with Max's best friend, Lucien (Jean-Philippe Ecoffey), who seems to have chosen the wrong woman for whom to renounce his philandering.

Collisions, coincidences and carefully planted clues propel this first effort by Mimouni, whose background in TV commercials shows itself not merely in his expert depiction of smart young Paris but in a crisp way of juggling intrepidly with time and viewpoint. Illusion, Mimouni says, is a director's strongest weapon, and for two hours he maintains the tension of an ingenious plot, feeding us out-of-sequence fragments of a puzzle that can be understood only when the final piece is inserted. I enjoyed it the first time, but needed to see it twice to get the full logic — which some, though not I, may see as an indication of failure.

Cassel shows a developing gift for Tatiesque visual comedy, Bohringer is magical, even in a Tracey Thorn wig, and Bellucci, a newcomer, is perhaps best described as looking like Isabelle Adjani, only more so. All round, a nice surprise.

# Half fantasy, half reality

VENICE FILM FESTIVAL
**Derek Malcolm**

*THE* 54th Venice festival kicked off with a new work by an old master. At least some would call Woody Allen that — rather more, as he keeps on saying, in Europe than in America.

He was not in town for the première of his latest comedy, Deconstructing Harry, because he hates the fuss of festivals. But it almost seemed as if he were there, since he plays the deconstructed Harry — a writer from New York City, whose life is a mess largely because of the way he has treated the women in it. The film keeps one wondering how much is real and how much imagined.

It is probably one third pretty near the truth and two thirds fiction, and it goes extraordinarily well with Barbara Kopple's Wild Man Blues, a full-length documentary about Allen. This is about Allen's jazz tour of Europe, but also peeks, sometimes with immoderate frankness, at the man behind the obsessive New Orleans clarinettist, who says at one point that, wherever he is, he really wants to be somewhere else.

It is a comment that could equally have been made by the fictional Harry — a man with an ex-wife, a mistress, a student who is in love with him, a psychiatrist who goes to bed with him, and a black hooker who satisfies him in between.

Harry, though, is not the lucky man he might suppose. When he is honoured as a writer by his old university, he can only get the hooker to accompany him.

The story is told half as fantasy, half as reality. As a writer, he imagines certain circumstances which are played out before us, and they contrast with what is really happening in his chaotic life. Clearly this is meant to illustrate some serious points about the whole damned business of life and love.

Allen: art intimates life

It may, however, also offend. There has never been a Woody Allen film filled with more lewd jokes, four-letter words and nude female bodies. Nor has there been one less politically correct.

The Jewish Harry rails against Orthodox Jewry and their capacity to divide humanity into those who are Jewish and those who are not. As a writer he is endlessly surprised when his various women complain that his latest successful novel includes diatribes against them.

The all-star cast, which includes Demi Moore, Elisabeth Shue, Judy Davis, Mariel Hemingway, Kirstie Alley and Hazelle Goodman, go to it with a will.

Deconstructing Harry has its dull patches, chiefly when an unfamiliar vulgarity takes over. You get a bit of the same feeling from Wild Man Blues, as the real Woody progresses with his band across Europe, shuffling off enthusiastically and gradually getting tired of the adoring crowds and the Italian matrons who would clearly give anything to become one of his sexual playthings. But, alas for them, he is accompanied throughout by the girl he introduces as "the notorious Soon Yi Previn".

Like the fictional Harry, Allen seems a slightly sad figure, neither happy enough to enjoy his success nor able to relate to those around him except at a polite distance.





# Guerrilla wall fare

The revolutionary muralist David Siqueiros fought fascism and poverty. He was lethal with paint, says **Laura Cumming**, but less so with a machine-gun

*IN THE* small hours of May 23, 1940, Leon Trotsky was awakened by the rattle of gunfire and the sudden stench of cordite seeping beneath his bedroom door. Minutes later, the room was strafed with bullets — afterwards nearly 100 holes were found in the walls. Trotsky hid under the bed. He survived because the gunmen had fired blindly from the corridor outside. They never troubled themselves to open the door.

The leader of these incompetent would-be assassins was David Alfaro Siqueiros, one of the celebrated "Mexican Muralists" and a giant of Latin American art. A few weeks later, when Raman Mercader had taken the fatal axe to Trotsky's skull, Siqueiros was discovered hiding in the Mexican hills. His intention, he said, had not been to kill Trotsky but to produce a "psychological shock" in protest against the Russian exile.

Released on bail, Siqueiros vanished for several years. He left behind his only psychological self-portrait: one section of his face in hyperbolic detail, the muscular nose looming forward beneath a shocking eye, bloodshot with sleepless intensity.

If David Siqueiros was hit-and-miss as a communist guerrilla, he was a crack revolutionary artist. From first to last, his work is dynamic with the will to struggle against poverty, fascism and war, imprisonment, slavery and torture.

Like his fellow muralists, José Orozco and Diego Rivera, he used walls as vast blackboards for pictorial manifestos, addressed to a population that was then largely illiterate.

But where his comrades' work tended to be static, even ornamental in the case of Rivera's neat parades of blue-denimed peasants, Siqueiros borrowed the cinematic montage pioneered by his friend Sergei Eisenstein to dramatise gory historical flashbacks against bright visions of the future. In return, Eisenstein thanked him for the innovation of the close-up, which you can see over and again in the spectacular easel paintings amassed at Whitechapel Art Gallery in London (until November 2) to celebrate the centenary of Siqueiros's birth.

The son of a lawyer from Mexico City, Siqueiros abandoned school in 1915 to join the revolutionary army against President Huerta. He may have trained in the open-air art schools that proliferated under the victorious General Carranza, though he patently had no time for the cactus-and-compañero primitivism they spawned.

His politics, like his paintings, are tricky to follow through the 1920s, partly because he kept dropping the one for the other. In 1926, he abandoned art to organise the miners' strike. Four years later, in 1930, jailed for Communist party membership, he began turning his activism into art. His earliest paintings are horrifying, heavy-handed, crude. But then so are the subjects. What could be more brutal than forcing a political prisoner between stone slabs?

After his release he painted at the artists' colony at Taxco. He worked on burlap and coconut matting, shaved until it resembled the rough but pristine surface of an adobe wall. The pictures became so large he had to erect scaffolding to paint them. His 1931 portrait of Emile Zapata is the single biggest close-up in the history of art, the general's monumental head blocking the field of vision, his moustache a giant scimitar, his massive black hat forcing the walls of his jail apart.

Siqueiros had hit the big time in every respect. The picture was sold for a packet to Charles Laughton, Hollywood's largest man. How those rich gringos loved their Mexican Muralists. Rivera worked for Ford and Rockefeller, Orozco did walls in the East, and Siqueiros was welcomed in Hollywood.

It was not until 1939 that he finally completed a mural back in Mexico City — the prodigious Portrait Of The Bourgeoisie — prompting Rivera to scoff, "Siqueiros talks, I paint!" Siqueiros did more than talk. He organised unions for workers and artists, produced political magazines from Chile to Chihuahua, and went to jail, even in his 60s, protesting against the government's idea of social democracy. He updated his art to accommodate the media, satirising the triumphalist crowds in Leni Riefenstahl's films, rivalling the simplicity of cinema posters, collaging photographic quotations into his work like the photomontages of John Heartfield.


Embodying the struggle . . . Siqueiros's Down But Not Defeated

The pity is that many of his finest political paintings left Mexico before their influence could take effect. But anyone who has ever seen the spine-chilling icon in New York of a peasant against a dark El Greco sky will never forget its ambiguity; his nervous hands toy with a traditional white shirt, but his face beneath the sombrero is a ferocious Aztec mast. As a peasant he is frail, as a national symbol faceless.

It was in New York that Siqueiros started his own revolution, the success of which he would see during his life. He opened an artists' workshop in Union Square to experiment with spray guns, pyroxilin and enamel, which he poured and threw against panels. To this workshop came Philip Guston and Jackson Pollock.

Look at Siqueiros's extraordinary End Of The World, where the last man alive is a miniature figure lost among hard coals of coagulated paint beneath a sky of crimson spatter, and you will see the origins of Abstract Expressionism. The picture was intended as an apocalyptic warning as Hitler and Franco gathered power in Europe.

In 1939, Siqueiros returned despondently from fighting against Franco and painted a yet more powerful picture, Down But Not Defeated. The vast, half-naked man is forced to knuckle under, his body radically foreshortened as he falls towards the viewer. But his massive fists and shoulders are already rising, his burnished forehead beginning to lift. Surely there's something familiar in the heroic nose? This is Sequeiros's exhortation to continue the struggle.

# The truth is . . . I don't care

TELEVISION
**Desmond Christy**

**TRUST no one, least of all the writers of The X Files (BBC1). But millions still give up hours and hours of their time to this monster narrative which stretches across years of their lives. There is even a programme, The X-Philes, in which fans explain why they love the paranormal explorations of Agents Mulder and Scully.**

**You should adopt a strict training schedule if you want to understand what is going on in The X Files. Get used to alien abductions and the idea that the United States government has known about the presence of aliens on our planet for more than 50 years. Or the idea that there are no aliens. The government just uses the idea of aliens to distract attention from all the secret experiments it is carrying out on its citizens.**

**The first episode of the new series was not untypical. A crazy man pulls out a gun in a fast-food restaurant and starts shooting people. A police marksman fires back and wounds him. Then a miracle happens. A man we are to call The Gentle-Looking Man steps out of the crowd and touches the wounded man's bloody chest. In moments he has been healed. The Gentle-Looking Man disappears. All the wounded have been healed. Later, when Scully and Mulder watch frame-by-frame footage of the shooting, they see that the Gentle-Looking Man "morphs" into another man.**

**Later still, the Cigarette Smoking Man and a group of agents arrest the Gentle-Looking Man. At the same time, Agent Scully is arresting a man who looks exactly like the Gentle-Looking Man.**

**The Perplexed-Looking Man, who writes about television for the *Guardian*, might have given in, but he persists. He freezes the tape and morphs into The Man Putting The Kettle On For A Cup Of Tea. Then he rings his colleague, Agent Rule who will know what it all means. But she is The Woman Who Does Not Answer The Phone. Is she the victim of an alien abduction? I was relieved to find her at her desk this morning.**

**THE Perplexed-Looking Man has reached the following conclusion. It doesn't matter that we don't understand what is going on. What matters is the atmosphere, the ambience of terror and mystery, and the postponement of "closure" — that moment when everything is explained.**

**The creator of The X Files is now working with a narrative on an industrial scale. Many episodes will lead us into a narrative cul-de-sac. We will have to turn back and find the main narrative. It seems to be promised, as Heaven is promised as an end of the Christian story, that the Truth That Is Out There will be made known.**

**And whatever it all means, as Graham Greene once pointed out in an essay on Charles Dickens, will seem tame and disappointing. The bigger the conspiracy, the tamer the solution. At times it seems that The X Files is merely repeating the story of the angelic host. There are good angels and bad angels, good aliens and bad aliens, doing battle for our souls (or our bodies, or the planet). We must believe to be saved.**

**A narrative where anything goes is a narrative without rules. Nobody will blame us if we morph into The People Watching The Other Channel.**

# Symphony of light

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
**Michael Billington**

*PETER STEIN'S* magical production of The Cherry Orchard opened in Berlin in 1989. Revived twice in Salzburg, it now ends its life at the Edinburgh Festival Theatre and is radically changed since the Berlin premiere: less in thrall to Stanislavsky's original production notes and visually simplified in Karl-Ernst Herrmann's new designs. It remains, however, the most haunting version I have ever seen of the century's greatest play.

But is "play" quite the right word? Stanislavsky's wife — the original Anya — got it right when she wrote to Chekhov in 1903 that "The Cherry Orchard is not a play but a piece of music, a symphony". And that seems to me the guiding principle of Stein's production: sound, light, images and spatial relationships are as important as language and character in exploring the idea that we are watching the process of dynamic change that, for good and ill, has reverberated throughout our century.

Realism and symbolism constantly merge in Stein's vision. As Ranyevskaya and her entourage return home in the first act, everything is rivetingly specific: dogs yelp and bark in recognition, bookcases are sentimentally apostrophised, the romantic land-owner herself dances on top of her old nursery-table. But when Firs recalls the ritual by which dried cherries were once shipped off by the cart-load to Moscow, we hear a low, stringed vibration that throughout symbolises change.

Stein's emphasis on symbolism is not, however, achieved at the expense of character: above all he reminds us that the tragedy of Ranyevskaya and her brother Gaev is that they have never fully grown up, whilst that of her adopted daughter, Varya, and the student, Trofimov, is that they have misplaced their youth.

In a sense everyone, in this most communal of all plays, is locked inside a private solitude. Stein beautifully makes visible Chekhov's key point: that these people never quite connect with each other or their society. The most poignant of all missed connections occurs in the final act when Lopakhin is left alone to propose to Varya: his hands tantalisingly hover over her waiting body only to withdraw at the last second.

Stein also catches perfectly Chekhov's contrapuntal balance of comedy and tragedy. In the third act, Ranyevskaya's world falls apart, while behind her, very short women dance with absurdly tall men at a Gogolian hop to the sound of an authentic Jewish band. In the final act of leave-taking, Ranyevsakaya assembles the whole household for a reverent silence broken only by the sound of Yepikhodov's uncontrolled burps and Yasha's tasteless giggles.

This is Chekhov presented in all his poetic realism and symbolic *Sachlichkeit*, or factuality. And the cast is immaculately led by Jutte Lampe's radiantly feckless Ranyevskaya, a model of arrested development.

In its sheer physical beauty and combination of realistic detail and rigorous form, it remains the most symphonic Chekhov production I have ever seen.

# Carnival of confusion

**James Wood**

Me, the Moon and Elvis Presley
by Christopher Hope
Macmillan 263pp £15.99

*ANYONE* familiar with contemporary South African writing knows its curse, which is the intolerable excitement of politics. So much is happening so fast that the novelist is in danger of becoming a mere needle on the glass of change, scratching yearly increments, recording outrageousness but unable to stop for long enough to exert the counter-pressure of artistic shape.

Christopher Hope's new novel tells the history of a small South African town from the end of the war until the mid-1990s. Hope offers a cartoonish vigour, full of shiny externals. There are marvellous, vivid portraits — the entrepreneur who comes to town determined to turn a backwater into a flood; the new Asian mayor of the post-apartheid era who is a monster of political correctness; the old English traditionalist who lived in the town since before the last war and who has seen all its mutations.

Hope is often very funny and acute about the contradictions and absurdities of the new South Africa. We see the town change names — from Buckingham (its English name) to Lutherburg (its Afrikaans name, won in 1954 at the height of the apartheid domination) and back to Buckingham in 1994, after what inhabitants call "the Change". We follow the path of Mimi de Bruyn, the town's deputy mayor, who in 1949 was sold as a servant to the formidable Aunt Betsy. Mimi encapsulates South Africa's political development; in half a century she has gone from near-slave to near-queen. Yet Hope shows us that in many ways little has changed. He flourishes this disappointed summation: "In fact all that had changed were the tunes, the names, the codes, the words for not saying what you meant. The privileged minority, alias white folks, still lived in the town proper and the traditionally deprived majority, a.k.a. brown folks, were stuck out in Golden Meadow..."

Into the new Buckingham comes Pascal Le Gros, an eccentric businessman dressed entirely in white. Pascal has bought the local hotel and has plans to put Buckingham on the map; a Bushman theme park is one of his ideas (though Mimi provides the solution most likely to unite the town's disparate factions — an Elvis Presley festival). Hope moves deftly between the Buckingham of the present — a carnival of confusion, earnest gestures and ideological triumphalism — and the Lutherburg of the 1950s, which begins to resemble its later incarnation in suggestive ways. What impresses is the amount of sharp satire Hope has compacted into a brief book; with a dense economy of narrative, he tells the history of a whole town.

But there is a cost to Hope's knowingness. His novel lives so fatly in the world that it has no time for the internal silhouette. The comedy seems too obvious, too unoriginal. Perhaps the problem is that Hope tells his novel in a jaunty third person which is, in effect, the voice of the town's community. When Pascal and his two colleagues arrive at the town's hotel we are told this: "Maureen, who wore big hair pieces and liked exotic arrangements, an elaborate beehive or a well lacquered bird's nest — and laugh like a pneumatic drill. The town said probably they slept to a bed." This is a generic description; its exoticism is ordinary. Maureen sounds like anyone.

What most moves are the moments when Hope quietens his strenuous comedy and finds memory. When Mimi remembers her childhood in the old town, the writing comes in a rush of fine detail, and the reader suspects that Hope has unmoored some vessel of his own memory. Mimi recalls the old Jewish trader and his loaded cart: "His cart reeked of peppermint oil, black shag tobacco, bitter sugar and snuff and the little sugar lozenges beloved in the parts by old and young because they lingered on the tongue and cost so little and smelt so sweet they were called 'ladies breath'." It is in such hollows of recollection that this always lively book comes to true fictional life.

# Miami junction

**Maya Jaggi** meets the Cuban American writer Cristina García

*AS CRISTINA GARCIA* sat down to begin her latest novel in Los Angeles, an earthquake struck. A New Yorker by upbringing, she first thought it was an underground train rumbling beneath her. "Then I thought, there's no subway in LA."

The layering of the mundane and the bizarre could have come straight from her fiction. Like her debut novel, Dreaming In Cuban (1992), her new work, The Agüero Sisters, is a sensuous, often funny tale whose magic is rooted in reality.

García forms part of the wave of United States Latino writers who made their breakthrough with Oscar Hijuelos's Pulitzer prize-winning The Mambo Kings Play Songs Of Love (1989). But in contrast to the more machismo thrust of her fellow Cuban-American Hijuelos, García's focus is unabashedly on women.

Her novels, set in Cuba and the US, centre on families split by Fidel Castro's revolution — polarised by politics and geography, allegiance and exile. "I don't think there's a Cuban family that's not affected by fallout from the revolution," García says. "It's a diaspora; there's always the heartache of having someone beloved somewhere else."

Born just before the 1959 revolution, García left Cuba aged two when her parents moved to New York. She spent her youth "trying to run away from a sense of being Cuban: Cubanness represented restraint. Growing up I felt like I had the strictest mother in the universe. There was no privacy — journals, letters were tapped into, which would appal my friends". Now, she says: "I've come full circle; the place I was trying to escape is what I've chosen to inhabit."

The "Cubanness thing kicked in" when she first visited her birthplace in her mid-20s. "I met my mother's family; a big, complicated, welcoming tribe. It was exotic but gave me a temporary sense of having found home."

She also discovered "a different side to the revolution", having heard only the down-side from a mother estranged from her relatives. "In my family there's this fierce struggle over family myth and history. People have political agendas and axes to grind. Everyone's version is competing with everyone else's."

Family secrets and lies in The Agüero Sisters echo repression and propaganda: the half-sisters Constancia and Reina side with different parents over their mother's mysterious death, becoming an emblem of Cuba's rifts.

The sisters' rendezvous in Miami after 30 years apart in Havana and New York was inspired by a real reunion between García's mother, who retired to Miami, and an aunt from Cuba. The meeting was cut short by renewed squabbles. "I was fascinated by the idea of two sisters meeting and having to reconcile — sisters who are both exiles within the exile community," says García.

Petite, monogamous Constancia runs a cosmetics empire and drives around Miami in a pink Cadillac convertible. Reina, an Amazonian sexual adventurer and electrician for "El Líder", uses Constancia's creams to grease her wrenches ("Oyé, chica, since when did cellulite ever deter passion?"). Constancia's life follows some of García's mother's contours, while Reina is "some weird alter ego of mine", she laughs.


Cristina García: 'My home is on the page' PHOTO: MARTIN GODWIN

The men are wimps: preening, self-deluded and less well-endowed than they think. Constancia's husband joins with fellow exiles in the Bay-of-Pigs-type invasion fiasco to win back Cuba from the communists.

A former journalist, García was Time Magazine's bureau chief in Miami. She keeps her distance from both Castro fervour and Miami exiles nursing nostalgia and revenge, "parading nationalism like a bunch of roosters on the make". Furious with Washington for its "preposterous blockade", she insists: "Exile intransigence is just the virulent flipside of communist intolerance."

Though claiming only "kitchen Spanish", she says the language modulates the cadence of her prose. "Spanish and more recent languages in the US are changing and amplifying what English can do." Yet she indignantly relates how, in the volatile racial climate of Los Angeles where she now lives, a little girl told her four-year-old daughter Pilar: "Only maids speak Spanish."

What, wonders García, will Pilar make of her hyphenated identity? Her father, García's ex-husband, is "half-Jewish, half-Japanese", making her "quite the 21st century child". But of her own sense of place, she has no doubts: "My home is on the page; it's what I create for myself.

The Agüero Sisters is published by Picador at £15.99

# Happy as Larry

**Natasha Walter**

Larry's Party
by Carol Shields
Fourth Estate 352pp £16.99

*CAROL SHIELDS* does lots of things well. She does everyday life well — the texture of a tweed jacket, the smell of lamb roasting in an oven. She reminds you how good ordinary life can be, she gives it to you in all its heart-warming sensuality. One of the best pages in this book is just a man looking at a flower. It's a great flower — an alstroemeria, rose streaked with lavender, and it comes from Colombia. But you get it for paragraph after paragraph. How many writers could keep you so intent on a plant?

She's also good at the flux of life — at the way things that look so certain one year become all snarled up and look totally different a few years later. Because she's such an optimistic writer, that sense of flux is never frightening. So in this novel her hero, Larry Weller, is a loser who turns into a winner. He's a guy who starts life as an outsider, and can't believe his luck when he ends up in the middle of the fun, and even, at the book's denouement, throwing his one great party.

And Shields does happiness well. In her books, bliss pops up from love and work and from nothing at all. Her new novel is written in just the same melodic, generous style as her best-loved work, The Stone Diaries. It takes Larry through divorce and bereavement and loneliness with a song always in his heart. He is the sort of man, as Shields's protagonists usually are, who can pluck joy from a stroll along the street or the sound of his ex-wife's voice on the telephone. From time to time he will just feel, "without warning, a potent electric shock of happiness so violent it seems to slice his body open from end to end".

Above all, Larry finds happiness in mazes, first on his honeymoon in Hampton Court maze, and then when he turns into a professional maze-maker himself, in gardens all over America.

But there are some things that Carol Shields doesn't do so well. She doesn't do sadness very well: even when Larry is depressed after he leaves his wife, he "distrusted slightly the state of his own wretchedness, which felt mechanically induced and inflated". This is curiously similar to a sentence in The Stone Diaries, in which her [illegible] pressed heroine notes: "She [illegible] trusts the sincerity of her own [illegible] tears, and she remembers how [illegible] ago, she loved to quote poe[illegible] William Blake, 'Weep, weep, in [illegible] of woe' and how the word woe [illegible] them all fall over laughing." [illegible] Shields has a problem with mis[illegible]

And although Shields is alwa[illegible] charming, so readable, she h[illegible] problem in rising to the nex[illegible] — in becoming memorable a[illegible] as readable, or surprising as w[illegible] charming. It's easy to spend [illegible] with her characters, but [illegible] wouldn't seek them out. "L[illegible] Weller felt himself to be an inno[illegible] man, and one who has little apt[illegible] for irony," she says of her [illegible] hero. Does anyone have such [illegible] ary thoughts about themselves?

What's more, Shields gets s[illegible] on the same tunes. Reading t[illegible] book is a bit like going round [illegible] round a maze — haven't I been [illegible] before, you wonder, as the nice [illegible] urban couples meet and part [illegible] meet and part. That's the prob[illegible] with Shields's novels. They are [illegible] gantly written, but they seem [illegible] sound the same note too often, [illegible] they don't go deep.

The central metaphor of [illegible] book, the maze, is a case in p[illegible] You've had enough of that metap[illegible] well before the last page, when [illegible] character decides to spell it out [illegible] you: "It seemed to me that all [illegible] was required was . . . just taking [illegible] right corner at the right mome[illegible] like one of your beautiful mazes."

Carol Shields doesn't need [illegible] wrap her books up as neatly as [illegible] She could let her characters [illegible] up; and she herself could sprea[illegible] wings a little more.

To order this book at the special discount price of £12.99, contact CultureShop (see ad below)



# Paradise glossed

**Eric Griffiths**

A History of Heaven:
The Singing Silence
by Jeffrey Burton Russell
Princeton University Press
236pp £19.95

*SAINSBURY'S* supermarket gets more like Heaven every day; members of staff airily salute you with "Would you like to claim your Reward?" That is the gist of celestial welcome, too, according to some imaginations. Tony Hancock's, for instance, who in The Blood Donor kept a record of his donations to charity and planned to hand the ledger confidently over to St Peter when called to account for himself: "There you are, mate, tot that lot up."

Tony Hancock was in the apostolic tradition. Saints James and John asked Jesus for places of honour in Heaven "on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand". They wanted promotion. Jesus's reply — "Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?" — is often taken only as a warning that Heaven is not easy of access, sometimes costing even an excruciated death. The Lord may also have meant that, being human, James and John did not know how to say what they really wanted, couldn't frame their own desires for eternity. As Simone Weil sternly remarked, "belief in immortality is harmful because it is . . . in fact a belief in the prolongation of life, and it robs death of its purpose."

Heaven itself, not being in time or space, has no history. Jeffrey Burton Russell's book, then, begins to go wrong from its title on. It is a competent enough history of some Judaeo-Christian ideas about Heaven, from 200 years or so before Christ to Dante's Commedia. Russell holds a clear, orthodox line: "Heaven is Christ himself, and to be fully with Christ is to be fully in heaven." He stresses how the Christian doctrine of bodily resurrection distinguishes the religion sharply from philosophical concepts of an "immortal soul", a term, he points out, which appears neither in the New Testament nor in the early Church Fathers. And he is fair-minded, though not intellectually energetic, about the oddities this doctrine generates, such as Saint Augustine's suggestion that our bodies will on the last day be raised without defect (I hear voices crying "If it's without defect, it's not *my* body") and aged about 30. The company of the blessed will therefore resemble a perpetual Club Med, a prospect not everyone will find enticing.

Russell concentrates on abstract ideas of beatitude, and this may not be the best way to get at Heaven. Human beings seem to be such that all their attempts to articulate a sense of the ultimately desirable come out tenuous or self-contradictory. This is true of more earthy longings too — for Mr Right, for a decent society. Take the fact that one Old English word for Heaven is *uplyft* ("the upper air"). Heaven, this suggests, is, not the opium but the Prozac of the people, a condition of sustained euphoria achieved at the price of one's integrity, of never knowing quite whether it is really you who is so happy.

Heaven has no walls; as Russell says, "Whenever less than the whole world is loved, with all the creatures in it, whenever anyone or anything is excluded from love, the result is isolation and retreat from heaven." The angelic choirs, that is, sing to the universe the old, popular song: "I want to be happy but I can't be happy till I make you happy too."

Yet human desires for Heaven are constantly tainted by the appetite for an enclosed paradise; we find it hard to imagine otherwise. An embrace, for example, enfolds the beloved but in the same gesture shuts out all the rest — and the exclusion forms part of the bliss. Christ, though, said there would be no marriages, not even open ones, in Heaven.

Heaven, often pictured as a perfectly just city-state, was not allowed to be a multi-faith society. It could not, therefore, satisfy the hope which it is meant to answer, which Russell well defines as a "longing for unity, body and soul, in ourselves, with one another, and with the cosmos." Unity is not a single thing, it changes over time; people become able to see it where they could not see it before. The real subject of a "history of heaven" would be a history of such changes in the human ability to perceive order; this is something Russell does not and cannot give because it happens at a level other than that of his preferred abstract ideas. It happens rather as a musical ear changes over time, as we become able to hear with pleasure pattern and sense in music which might have struck earlier ears as merely dissonant.


Glimpse of heaven . . . Gustave Doré's vision of Dante's Paradiso

Works of art make better guides to Heaven. Russell has 14 pages of plates and two chapters on Dante, but he barely comments on the illustrations and should have spared us his dull inaccuracies about the poet. If you want to get near to what Heaven has meant and might still mean, ignore this book and visit instead a Romanesque church, such as Boscherville in Normandy, France, or Iffley in Oxfordshire, England. Neither place is without grotesquerie; each shows the historical variation of our tastes in eternity. But through their cool and filtered light, their mottled stones, they speak peaceably of an expansive, tender attention which we can sensibly hope might become our element for ever. And admission is free.

# A feeling for the Force

**John Redmond**

The Bounty
by Derek Walcott
Faber 78pp £14.99hbk £7.99pbk

*INSECTS* and clouds, bamboos and Shakespeare, sailing vessels, Santa Cruz, the hazy allure of European history and culture — these are some of the recurrent motifs in Derek Walcott's new collection. His characteristic setting is the island (especially the shore), his characteristic form is that of internal monologue, his characteristic topic is the State of the World, or, if that's not enough, the State of Walcott.

Since he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992, this book bears a similarly heavy set of expectations as did Seamus Heaney's post-Nobel collection, The Spirit Level. Like Heaney's book, The Bounty is a partial success. Perhaps it is precisely where it meets the expectations so obviously held for it that the book is a disappointment.

Over the past 20 years, Walcott has become identified with an international super-league of poets, a sort of literary equivalent to the Jedi Knights: a group including Heaney, Les Murray and the late Joseph Brodsky — all winners (or probable winners) of the Nobel. Like the Jedi, this group is small, addresses its members in the manner of a cosmic élite, and is animated by a vaguely religious, vaguely positive power very much like the Force — what Walcott here calls "bounty", what Heaney calls "spirit", and Murray calls "grace".

With his bardic style, Walcott often echoes the grandeur of Whitman or Yeats. Size is important to Walcott. He has always had an acute sense of space. He tends to write on a Statue of Liberty scale but puts in much smaller figures to augment the dimensionality — the ants of the title poem are an example ("I behold their industry and they are giants"). Partly this is because, like the infant on the nursery floor, he is not quite sure where he begins and ends — in other words, how big he is. One of his favourite words, for example, is "horizon", not surprising, perhaps, for an island-dweller.

In his own phrase, Walcott is "the mulatto of style", and his poems have always been seen as highly open to outside influences. "Fear of imitation," he has rather grandly declared, "obsesses minor poets." He has written nothing remotely as original as, say, "Crow" or "Quoof" or "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror". The ethos, instead, is one of conservative pastiche. Partly this pragmatic attitude is a reflection of the Caribbean's geography and history. His work is a record of influence, of a "flowing-in", experienced by his islands, which includes books and line-breaks as much as men and ships.

Perhaps because his work is relatively humourless, and so obviously self-admiring, one is tempted to adapt Auden's phrase about Yeats, and say he is "silly like us". His poems, like those of Yeats and Auden, often contain shallow concepts and false sentiments. Although he is not as good as Yeats or Auden, he is good enough, as they were — technically, rhetorically — to get away with his occasional falseness and superficiality. He is, essentially, a brilliantly descriptive poet blessed with a very good ear. When he writes "All I require is an acre of sunlight and salt wind", one believes this about as much as one believes that Yeats would have retired happily to Inisfree. But when he begins a poem, "To recede like a snail flattening its enquiring horns", we can only admire his gifts.

## Paperbacks

Nicholas Lezard

**On Grief and Reason: Essays, by Joseph Brodsky (Penguin, £9.99)**

*IT IS* rather humbling when someone whose native language was not English writes superbly well in it. Take this little aperçu from his "Homage to Marcus Aurelius": "What the past and the future have in common is our imagination, which conjures them. And our imagination is rooted in our eschatological dread: the dread of thinking that we are without precedence or consequence." Admire the way he sets up the idea of our being ambivalently poised between salvation and damnation, and all from the echoes created by the last four words: "without precedence" makes us think of being unprecedented — of being special, out of the blue; so the natural opposite to that, "without consequence", comes as a crashing shock, all the more so for coming as a natural counterpoint, part of a logically grammatical sequence.

Brodsky does this close-reading thing better than the above, especially in the title essay, a superb line-by-line reading of Robert Frost's poem "Home Burial". And if poetry fails to interest you, there is plenty of other stuff. Demerits, though, to Penguin for providing only patchy information as to the provenance and context of the essays, and no index.

**Cocaine Nights, by J G Ballard (Flamingo, £6.99)**

*BALLARD* is one of the most influential elder statesmen of contemporary literature. His habilitation into the culture now complete and secure, he just carries on having his sly kind of fun: this is a typical Ballard novel, flat, yet tenacious (not quite "gripping") prose carrying a hugely subversive message. Here, wealthy seaside condo dwellers make life worth living by going crazy on sex, drugs and explosions. As the song has it, if you want to survive, you've got to go a little crazy. I think he means it.

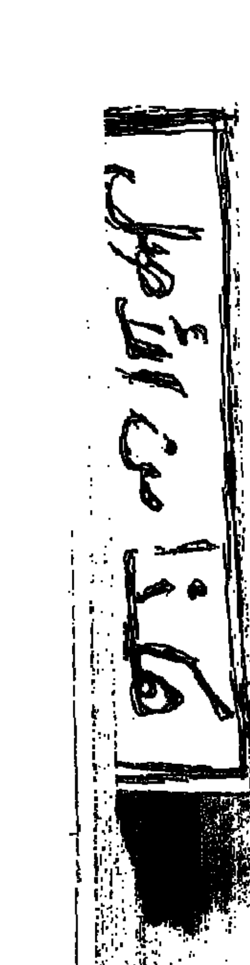
**A Book of Two Halves, ed Nicholas Royle (Indigo, £6.99)**

*FOOTBALL* is our religion, say the adverts; and God, do I hate religion. Twenty-four stories about footie, many of them from famous and good writers, eg, Irvine Welsh, Geoff Nicholson, Iain Sinclair and John Hegley (a poem in his case). There is also a nasty, snobbish and derivative story by someone with exactly the same name as myself. I suggest you tear those pages out before you take the book home with you. If you're mad enough to want it, that is.

**Michelangelo: The Poems, trs Christopher Ryan (Dent, £12.99)**

*YES*, he was also a poet, and a highly accomplished one. Reading his stuff makes you look at the art anew. Any renaissance poet writing so intensely about love and death is worth reading; hats off to Christopher Ryan for translating it so well.





# What's up Doc?

Paul Evans

*I ENJOY* watching the rabbits along an old railway way line in the mornings. Their complicated social lives are fascinating and for many people these endearing creatures offer contact with wild nature which modern life might otherwise deny. But trouble is brewing for the rabbits and it's not just from farmers and poachers.

About this time of year the rabbit-bashers go to press, complaining that the rabbit population is reaching epidemic proportions and something must be done to curb these "vermin". Mysteriously, a few months later, the problem seems to evaporate. This is largely because many of those bunnies hopping about now, at the end of the breeding season, will get the myxomatosis disease or be taken by predators.

At the University of East Anglia, outside Norwich, Dr Diana Bell has been studying a rabbit colony for more than 20 years. Each of the inhabitants of this warren is genetically fingerprinted and every aspect of their lives, and deaths, is meticulously studied. Every year between 60 per cent and 100 per cent of young rabbits contract myxomatosis, exploding the myth that the disease is no longer effective. All sorts of myths surround this disease: rabbits have learned to live on the surface and so avoid the disease, which is confined to their burrows; rabbits have become immune to the disease — none of this is true.

According to the British Association of Shooting and Conservation, the over-wintering population of rabbits in Britain numbers 100 million and between them they cause more than £40 million worth of damage to farmers' crops. This adds fuel to the argument that rabbits are just pests to be done away with. What is often overlooked is the role rabbits play in conservation.

Because of the way rabbits nibble and scratch, they maintain valuable habitats for many creatures which would otherwise be done for. Dr Paul Dolmon, an ecologist also at the University of East Anglia, has studied the way rabbits are vital for the survival of such rare birds as the stone curlew and the silver-studded blue butterfly on the heaths of the Brecklands in East Anglia.

Rabbits are also responsible for maintaining the wildflower-rich habitats in places where no other animals can graze, such as railway embankments. They are also vitally important in supporting the populations of predator species such as stoats, weasels, buzzards, foxes and polecats. The gamekeepers who attack predators that might take a fancy to their pheasants reared for shooting must take part of the blame for any increase in rabbit numbers.

As if myxomatosis were not enough, there's a new disease sweeping through the rabbit population. Rabbit viral haemorrhagaeic disease (RHD) seems to be a "new" virus that began in Europe in the 1980s and has spread due to the uncontrolled trade in domestic and farmed rabbits. It has been deliberately introduced in Australia but refused entry into New Zealand.

In Britain the disease was "controlled" but has since been denotified. While the British government has studiously ignored RHD, it is spreading rapidly through the country as it has throughout Europe. Dr Bell believes we have cause for alarm and says that the Government's refusal to research RHD or to take it seriously is "very sad".

What she means is that this is absolutely outrageous. Here is a new virus, which may or may not skip species and affect other animals; which is running rampant without any control or investigation; and which is wiping out a very important part of Britain's wildlife with who-knows-what consequences. Neither conservationists nor the rabbit bashers want to see rabbits completely eradicated, so the powers-that-be had better stop sitting on their hands. Could there be a sinister reason for such complacency, is there a rabbit conspiracy theory? What's up Doc?

## Chess Leonard Barden

*GIVEN* the choice, most chess-players prefer to attack the opponent's king rather than operate positionally on the other flank; and would rather have two bishops to two knights or to B+N. But as this week's game shows, the less popular type of advantage may be a sterner test of a player's skill, and require a more delicate judgment.

Before the penultimate round of the Smith & Williamson British Championship at Hove, Tony Kosten led the field by half a point, and his opponent, the second seed Matthew Sadler, could take the lead by beating him. In such tense circumstances, many players would charge at the black king, but Sadler instead chose a calm formation with a small space advantage that only gradually gave him a decisive grip on the contest. Perhaps the best strategic game of the championship.

Sadler v Kosten

**1 d4 e6 2 c4 Bb4+ 3 Nc3 c5 4 e3 Nf6 5 Nge2 cxd4** By transposition, a regular line of the Nimzo-Indian. Here, 5 . . . d5 6 a3 Bxc3+ 7 Nxc3 cxd4 8 exd4 dxc4 9 Bxc4 Nc6 is simpler; White's bishop pair is offset by the d4 isolani.

**6 exd4 d5 7 c5 Ne4 8 Bd2 Nxd2 9 Qxd2 Qd7** Black wants to strongpoint the light squares, hindering the advance of White's 3-2 Q-side pawn majority; and he plans to regroup his bishop to f6 via d8. It's a convoluted idea, and the direct challenge 9 . . . b6 is more flexible.

**10 a3 Ba5 11 g3 0-0 12 Bg2 Bd8 13 0-0 b6 14 f4 Na6 15 b4 Nc7 16 a4 Be7** He can't allow b5 and c6.

**17 Rfc1 Bb7 18 Nd1!** One of the best time tests of natural skill comprises hopping a knight at speed around a board that is empty except for four black pawns that it must avoid. Sadler did that test quickly, and in this game he would have foreseen, many moves earlier, the coming knight switch to the strong square c5.

**Rfc8 19 Nf2 b5 20 Nd3 Bc6 21 Nc5 Qc8 22 Nc3 bxa4** If a6 White keeps up the pressure by Bf1.

**23 Nxc6 Qxc6 24 Rxa4 a6 25 Rca1 h6 26 Bf1 Bf6 27** h4 When your opponent is passive in one area of the board, open up a second front. **g6 28 Kh2 Reb8 29 Be2 Kh7 30 h5 g5 31 Bxa6!** Decisive, creating two united passed pawns.

**Nxa6 32 b5 Qc7** Rxb5 fails to 33 Qd3+ and 34 Qxb5.

**33 b6 Qc7 34 Rxa6 Rxa6 35 Rxa6 Qc8 36 Ra7 Kg8 37** Kg1 **Bd8 38 fxg5 Bxg5 39** Qe2 **40 Nb5 e5 41 Qg4+ Resigns** Nd6 wins the house.

No 2489

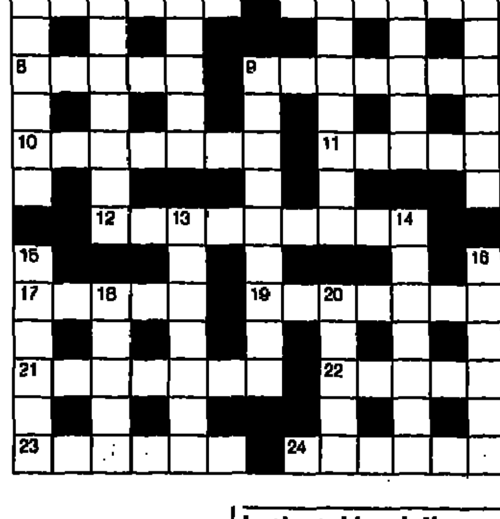
White mates in three moves against any defence (by C D Locock 1903). Locock included this puzzle in his book Imagination In Chess. Black is reduced to king moves, but White's key is a surprise.

No 2488: 1 Bd6 a3 2 Rxg4 hxg4 3 Bh2 g3 4 Nf7 gxh2 5 g4 mate.

The answer to the conundrum set last week is that rapid play was the clue, since in such games the players rather than the arbiter must claim time limit infractions. Black moved a piece down the board to deliver mate. White pointed out that Black's clock flag was down. Black resigned, only then noticing that White's flag was also down.

If Black had completed the mating move, he would have won irrespective of the clocks.

## Quick crossword no. 383



**Across**

1 Informal (6)
4 Frightened (6)
8 Benefit (5)
9 Malicious (7)
10 Madman (7)
11 Find answer to (5)
12 Humble (9)
17 Tie up (5)
19 Annul (7)
21 Weave (7)
22 Build — straight up (5)
23 Victim for a cause (6)
24 Boxer — chicken (6)

**Down**

1 Crib (6)
2 Loyal (7)
3 Distribute (5)
5 Shrub with drooping flowers (7)
6 Coral island (5)
7 Banish (6)
9 Waver (9)
13 Puzzle (7)
14 Manifest (7)
15 Current (6)
16 Beat (6)
18 Pronounce — complete (5)
20 Musical drama (5)

**Last week's solution**

## Bridge Zia Mahmood

*WHEN* should you bid a grand slam? The obvious answer to this is "when you can make one", but that isn't what a recent correspondent, Mr Charles Merry, had in mind. He'd been taken to task by an angry partner after bidding to seven hearts, which required him to play this trump suit for no loser:

♥ K 9 7 3
♥ A J 10 8 4

He had cashed the ace and king, the correct percentage play, but the queen failed to drop and he went down in his grand slam. "You should never bid a grand slam on a finesse," complained his partner. "It ought to be at least a three-to-one shot before you even think about bidding seven." Mr Merry wasn't sure that his partner was correct about this. What do you think?

Let's do some profit and loss calculations. If Mr Merry had made his grand slam, it would have been worth 2,210 points to his side (210 for tricks, 500 for rubber, 1,500 for the grand slam bonus).

When he went down, he lost on the surface of it just 100 points for the undertrick, but of course his loss in real terms was much greater, since by stopping in six hearts, his side could have scored 1,430 points. My economist friends tell me that this is called a "marginal cost", but it does not sound marginal to me. So, Mr Merry was risking 1,530 points to gain an extra 680. You can do the arithmetic for yourselves — such a risk is worthwhile only if the chances of success are about 68 per cent.

By a curious coincidence, this is the chance that if you have an eight-card suit between the two hands, the five adverse cards will divide 3-2. So, you are justified in bidding a grand slam if you need to avoid a loser in this suit:

♥ A K Q 3
♥ 7 6 4 2

but Mr Merry's trump suit did not offer good enough odds for his money. You will have noticed that his grand slam was better than a simple finesse — the queen might have been a singleton, or declarer might have cashed the right top honour to enable him to cope with a 4-0 break. But these extra chances bump up the odds to no more than 58 per cent.

Of course, circumstances alter cases. For example, if Mr Merry had been playing in a team-of-four match instead of a rubber bridge game, he would have been risking an adverse swing of 17 IMPs (–100 against –1,430 for six hearts making at the other table) in order to gain 13 IMPs (+2,210 against +1,460 in the other room). This is a worthwhile risk if the chances of success are around 57 per cent — which is almost exactly what they were.

However, this presupposes that the enemy pair at the other table are competent enough to reach six hearts. There is nothing more galling than to have your opponents play a laydown slam in a game, only to find that you have lost 13 IMPs because your team-mates went down in a grand slam.

So, the expert consensus is that you need roughly the same odds for a grand slam in match play as you do at rubber bridge — slightly better than two to one in your favour.



## Cricket NatWest Trophy

# Essex race to crushing win

FROM the ridiculous to the sublime. A year ago almost to the day, Essex came to Lord's with the highest of hopes only to depart humbled, all out in 27.2 overs for 57, the lowest score in a final; and no final had ever finished earlier, *writes Mike Selvey from Lord's.*

It was an embarrassment, and it needed rectification. Last Sunday, at 5.19pm precisely, all that was forgotten when Stuart Law, the sublimely talented Queenslander with a nature as abrasive as Desperate Dan's jaw, hit his 10th boundary of the day through the off-side to bring Essex victory.

The victory margin, nine wickets, had been matched in the NatWest or its previous incarnation, the Gillette Cup, only once, 15 years ago, when Surrey beat Warwickshire. Last year's game lasted until 14 balls after the tea interval; this took five deliveries fewer. Paul Prichard, a beleaguered captain one year, a hero the next, made 57 from 45 balls in an opening stand of 109 with Law. And with victory there for the taking, Nasser Hussain, under no pressure, dawdled to 25.

Law, the Man of the Match, who missed last year's fiasco because of commitments with the Australia team, rose above it all. He made an unbeaten 80, which also included a six, from 71 balls. For him and Essex, this was catharsis with knobs on.

As a spectacle this final, like so many of its predecessors, was a disaster, the toss yet again proving to be decisive. Only four times in the past 23 seasons, including last year and 1985 — when Essex won by one run, the first and only time they have won the competition — has the side batting first collected the trophy. None has been by a margin of less than four wickets.

September dew and the 10.30am start are the excuses used in mitigation, but last Sunday, for good measure, Warwickshire were outplayed in all departments. So efficiently did the Essex bowlers exploit the early conditions that Warwickshire were never allowed to gain momentum. Ashley Cowan removed Nick Knight with his second legitimate ball, had the other opener Smith taken at slip in his fourth over, and finished with three for 29.

The other seamers, including Ronnie Irani — a testament to the Munich clinic that has been treating him for the side strain sustained in the semi-final — chipped in, Peter Such held a remarkable one-handed return catch low down to get rid of Graeme Welch, and twice Paul Grayson pounced for run-outs.

Only Dominic Ostler (34) and Dougie Brown (37) were able to stay for any length of time. By the time the 60 overs were up, only 170 for eight had been accrued. The game was as good as up already.

Still there was a chance that Allan Donald, Brown, Welch and Gladstone Small could get the show on the road for Warwickshire. It was not to be, however. Instead it was cricketing carnage, the Warwickshire bowling reduced to rubble and the fielding to a rabble in the face of a calculated assault from Law and Prichard.

**Scores:** Warwickshire 170 for 8; Essex 171 for 1. Essex won by 9 wickets.

## Motor Racing Italian Grand Prix

# Emotions fuelled Coulthard

Alan Henry at Monza

DAVID COULTHARD scored an emotionally charged victory for McLaren-Mercedes at the Italian Grand Prix here after a well choreographed team effort which the 26-year-old Scot dedicated to the memory of Diana.

"I am very aware of the mood back home and I had the privilege of meeting her when I finished second in the British Grand Prix in 1995," he said.

"I have a picture of her and the princes back home and it made me feel very emotional when the Union flag was being raised behind me. For the last 10 laps of the race I found myself wondering whether I should be spraying champagne if I should get on the podium, but I got clarification of this and did so."

Coulthard qualified sixth after engine problems but a superb start catapulted him into third place at the first corner behind the pole starter, Jean Alesi's Benetton, and the Williams of Heinz-Harald Frentzen.

Coulthard's McLaren was carrying more fuel than his immediate rivals, giving him greater flexibility at the crucial mid-race refuelling stop. The additional fuel meant the car would spend less time stationary in the pit lane, offering a chance to leapfrog ahead of his rivals.

The strategy worked perfectly. Frentzen dropped from second place after a 10.3sec stop at the end of lap 29 and the McLaren team told Coulthard to follow Alesi into the pits three laps later.

The McLaren was at rest for 7.8sec, the Benetton for 8.7sec, enabling Coulthard to rejoin the race at the head of the field. Thereafter he drove with great composure and restraint, taking the chequered flag 1.9sec ahead of Alesi with Frentzen a further 2.4sec adrift in third place.

Neither of the drivers' championship contenders, Michael Schumacher and Jacques Villeneuve, was among the contenders. Williams and Ferrari had struggled to find a competitive set-up for this high-speed circuit, and when Schumacher qualified his Ferrari ninth, five places behind Villeneuve's Williams, the usually passionate Italian fans were stunned into silence.

Schumacher finished sixth, one place behind Villeneuve, which means the German leads the title chase by 10 points with four races remaining.

Coulthard . . . flawless tactics

This was the third victory of Coulthard's 3½-year Formula One career and his second of the season, the first having come in the opening race in Melbourne. The Scot said it was no coincidence that he had won only two weeks after McLaren ended uncertainty over his future by renewing his contract for next season.

"That uncertainty certainly means that you have to compete under a degree of pressure which disrupts you from doing your job properly," he said. "My only worrying moment came when I hit a kerb quite hard and got into a huge slide at the very point on the circuit where I spun off on the parade lap before the 1995 race here. Thankfully I didn't go off this time."

Fourth place went to the highly rated Giancarlo Fisichella after a solid run from third on the grid in his Jordan-Peugeot. The Italian was a consistent performer all weekend, in contrast to his increasingly erratic and unpredictable team-mate Ralf Schumacher, who ended the race at the centre of controversy after pushing Johnny Herbert's Sauber into a spectacular 190mph accident by underbraking at the first chicane.

Herbert was fortunate to emerge unhurt after colliding with a tyre barrier and was highly critical of the German.

Track stewards who reviewed the incident concluded that it was a racing accident. The decision was met with disbelief by many in the paddock and highlighted the inconsistencies that result from sanctions being applied by different officials from race to race.

## Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

# Rocca on a roll in European Masters

COSTANTINO ROCCA produced a nine-under-par final round of 62 for a total of 266 to win the European Masters at Crans-sur-Sierre last Sunday. The Italian came from five shots behind the overnight leader Nick Faldo to finish one ahead of Scott Henderson of Scotland and Sweden's Robert Karlsson. Faldo dropped back to finish joint sixth with a 70.

It was Rocca's first victory since the Volvo PGA championship last year and it brought him $210,000 in prize money.

Colin Montgomerie, needing to finish in the top 11 to resume his position of the past four years as European No 1, did so, but was highly critical of the course: "The greens are not acceptable. I'll find somewhere else to play next year."

EUROPEAN Ryder Cup captain Severiano Ballesteros ended weeks of speculation by naming Nick Faldo of England and Jesper Parnevik of Sweden as his two personal selections. The two were widely expected to get the nod after Spain's José-Maria Olazábal made the team last week. Olazábal's inclusion at the expense of Miguel Angel Martin may cause problems right up to the start of the competition at Valderrama on September 26. Martin, who has not played since mid-July because of a wrist injury, is threatening legal action, claiming he was not given enough time to prove his fitness.

DAMON HILL may drive for Alain Prost's team next season after Prost raised his offer for the world motor-racing champion's services to $8 million. Negotiations had come to a halt after Prost was unable to offer a retainer above $5 million. But now increased financial support from the team's fuel sponsor, Total, and Peugeot, who will switch their engine supply from Jordan to Prost next season, is said to have closed the gap.

Elsewhere in motor-racing, Finland's Formula One driver Mika Hakkinen was stripped of his third-place finish in the Belgian Grand Prix three weeks ago. The International Automobile Federation also fined McLaren $50,000 after finding them guilty of using a non-conforming fuel. The punishment means Heinz-Harald Frentzen moves from fourth to third, Jacques Villeneuve goes up to fifth from sixth and Michael Schumacher's lead is reduced to 10 points.

France's Olivier Panis returned to the wheel last week, less than three months after breaking both legs in a crash at the Canadian Grand Prix. He made several runs on the Le Castellet track in a Formula Three car and is expected back in a Prost Formula One car this week.

SAM MOORE, one of five Irish riders taking part in the Blenheim horse trials, was fatally injured in a fall from Darragh Rock during the speed-and-endurance phase of the event last Sunday. The 35-year-old from Kilrea, Co Londonderry, fell at the 19th fence on the 27-obstacle course. He was given emergency treatment but was dead on arrival in hospital at Oxford.

SOUTH AFRICA have joined Australia and England in parting company with their rugby coach. Carel du Plessis has been sacked midway through a 12-month contract after a dismal season in which the Springboks were beaten in a series by the British Lions and suffered record defeats by New Zealand and Australia. Du Plessis had come under attack for his team selections. England's Jack Rowell and Greg Smith of Australia are the other two coaches who have resigned in recent weeks.

BLACKBURN Rovers have signed Norwegian international Thore Pedersen from German club St Pauli, for a fee believed to be around $1.6 million. The 27-year-old defender will help boost Rovers' defence following the departure of Henning Berg to Manchester United, and Graeme le Saux to Chelsea.

MICK DOOHAN, Australia's motorcycling champion, who has won four successive 500cc world titles for Honda, is reported to have been offered $12 million to ride for Suzuki next season.

# Athens wins five-city race for Olympics

John Rodda in Lausanne

**THE Games of 2004 will be staged in the birthplace of European civilisation and the Olympic movement, a decision that many would say was made eight years too late.**

**On Friday last week, after a day of exhortation here by heads of state and the likes of Luciano Pavarotti, the 107 members of the International Olympic Committee chose Athens, convincingly, from the five candidate cities. The contest went to four rounds, plus an early tiebreaker, and in the end Athens outpolled Rome by 66-41.**

**Even the first round had drama as Cape Town and Buenos Aires trailed with 16 votes each; in the run-off Cape Town won 62-44. In the second round Cape Town took most of the Buenos Aires votes so Stockholm was next out with 19 votes.**

**Then Cape Town's bid ended with a hearty 20 as Athens polled 52 and Rome 35, the Italians picking up only seven votes from the previous round. That result ensured that South Africa will be back with another bid.**

**Eight years ago in Tokyo, Athens was expected to win and so celebrate the 100th anniversary of the movement that began in the city in 1896. But the IOC did not like "the Games are ours by right" theme of their bid. So the centenary Games went to private enterprise in Atlanta, and the IOC is still smarting from the organisational blunders that the United States committed.**

**"We put right a wrong of eight years ago," said the Mary Glen-Haig, an IOC honorary member from England.**

**In the ancient Games at Olympia women were banned even from watching. Last week's triumph by the Greeks fell firmly on the shoulders of a woman: Gianna Angelopoulos, a lawyer whose dynamism has convinced the IOC members that Athens will overcome the acknowledged problems of pollution and transportation.**

**Angelopoulos and her millionaire husband have homes in London, Boston, New York and Athens. "The new Greece won today," she said. "This is a victory for Olympism. We will make these the Olympic Games of their dreams for the world in 2004."**

**Greeks reacted to the news with an outburst of national euphoria not seen, perhaps, since the modern Games were revived 101 years ago. Within seconds of Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC president, announcing the winning city, jubilant Greeks rejoiced amid a cacophony of car horns and ecstatic chants.**

**Outside the offices of the Olympic bidding committee beneath the ancient Acropolis where thousands had gathered to hear the result, lasers lit up the skies. Even policemen shot their guns into the air as cannons were fired from Lycabettos hill, the limestone outcrop that faces Pericles's masterpiece.**

